

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

XXI

(August - December 1921)

THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

August 1966 (Bhadra 1888)

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, DELHI-6 AND PRINTED IN INDIA BY JIVANJI D. DESAI, NAVAJIVAN PRESS, AHMEDABAD-14

The present volume covers the period August 21 to December 14, 1921. The month of September was the last lap in the race for "swaraj within a year". The stage was being set for a dynamic programme of action which would deliver the final blow and compel the Government to bow to the strength of public opinion. Unable to fathom the meaning of swaraj, which for Gandhiji was more a spiritual than a political state, many people believed that he would work some miracle and bring them freedom in the overt sense before the end of the year. But, even as preparations proceeded apace for pure, concentrated satyagraha in the form of mass civil disobedience in the selected areas of Bardoli and Anand talukas in Gujarat, Gandhiji had an uneasy feeling that he might not see India free within the time-limit set, and the thought filled him with unbearable anguish of mind. The contents of this volume tell this two-fold story of preparations for the final phase of the struggle on the one hand and of shocks and misgivings on the other.

To prepare the ground for the silent revolution which he wished to bring about among the people, Gandhiji had undertaken a "*pradakshina* of the country", a pilgrimage which took him from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. While he was far away in Assam in the course of this tour, he saw newspaper reports of a sudden outbreak of violence in Malabar. In this coastal strip in the south-west, the Moplahs, descendants of Arab immigrants who had for centuries lived in isolation from the mainstream of national life, had on August 20 risen in revolt and declared a "holy war". They had but the vaguest notions of the Khilafat movement and no conception whatever of non-violent non-co-operation. In their unthinking fury, they attacked their Hindu neighbours and committed atrocities against them which threatened the growing Hindu-Muslim amity in the country. Things were made worse by the attitude of some Muslim leaders which seemed to condone the outrages. Gandhiji was hard put to it to assuage the feelings of the Hindus in the south. He recognized that the Moplahs had lost their balance, but appealed to the Hindus to preserve a sense of due proportion and not allow the aberration of the Moplahs to weaken the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. He blamed the Government for letting the situation assume the

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PREFACE

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proportions it did and assailed it for preventing non-co-operation leaders from exercising their influence to restore peace and communal harmony in the region. He pleaded for the nation's sympathy for the Moplahs for the inhuman treatment they were receiving from the authorities. Despite his sincere efforts to heal the wound, the repercussions of this local upheaval continued to be felt for a long time.

Gandhiji's efforts to preserve Hindu-Muslim amity seemed to be handicapped by the absence of the Ali Brothers. They were the principal interpreters between the Muslims and him during this time. Some of their speeches during the months preceding the period covered in this volume had tended to create an atmosphere of violence and made them controversial figures in the public life of the country. They were now arrested for supporting the Resolution of the Karachi Khilafat Conference regarding military service, and prosecuted in Karachi. Gandhiji stood by the Brothers. He defended and justified their conduct against every criticism, and in speech after speech repeated what the Ali Brothers were reported to have said at Karachi. He arranged for the issue of a Manifesto signed by prominent leaders from all over India, supporting the stand of the Ali Brothers (p. 235), and even persuaded the Working Committee of the Congress to pass a resolution reiterating the Karachi Resolution (p. 274). And he wrote a challenging article, "Tampering with Loyalty", in which he declared: ". . . I have no hesitation in saying, that it is sinful for anyone, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this Government which has proved treacherous to the Mussulmans of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab. I have said this from many a platform in the presence of sepoys" (p. 221). This was one of the articles on the basis of which Gandhiji was prosecuted and sentenced in March 1922.

If, as Gandhiji saw and admitted, Hindu-Muslim unity was a delicate plant which required careful nurturing, the swadeshi movement too needed much vigorous propagation before it could command universal appeal. The bonfires of foreign cloth had distressed even a friend like C. F. Andrews, as being an expression of unreasoning hatred of the foreigner (p. 41). Answering this criticism, Gandhiji said: "Destruction is the quickest method of stimulating production. By one supreme effort and swift destruction, India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness" (p. 44). Answering another critic, Gandhiji argued: "In burning foreign clothes we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. . . . The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. . . . The

idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. . . . The disease had gone so deep that a surgical operation was a necessity" (p. 102).

But the misgivings of critics were not allayed. A more vibrant dialogue over the subject took place between the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and Gandhiji in October. The two had met in Calcutta on September 6. There were differences of opinion between them. Incorrect reports of the interview appeared in the Press in an obvious attempt to divide the two. In the October issue of *Modern Review* appeared Tagore's "brilliant essay" on the swadeshi movement, under the title "The Call of Truth." The Poet had seen in the movement an attempt to shut out modern, international influences from the country. In an emphatic rejoinder under the title "The Great Sentinel", Gandhiji answered the Poet: "He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flowed during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. . . . I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow" (p. 291).

The intensity of Gandhiji's identification with the hungry masses led to a change in his personal life. While discussing the dearth of khadi, Gandhiji often recommended to the people severe austerity in apparel. And he decided to practise what he preached. On the early morning of September 23, he went clad only in a loin cloth to a meeting of Madura weavers. Explaining the change, he said: "In our climate we hardly need more to protect our bodies during the warm months of the year. Let there be no prudery about dress" (p. 180). On October 31, Gandhiji took a vow to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and to forgo the meal if he failed to spin. Another life-long vow which Gandhiji took during this period was his weekly fast on Monday, which was to be a "silence day".

This last vow was an outcome of his fast following the riots in Bombay on November 17, the day on which the Prince of Wales landed in the city. Gandhiji had felt "that the Prince's visit is being exploited for advertising the "benign" British rule

in India" (p. 350), and said that it was "being heralded by repression in the land" (p. 351). He, therefore, had advised the people to organize a complete boycott of all functions held in the Prince's honour, but had also warned that there would be "some who would want to take part in the various functions from fear or hope or choice. They have as much right to do what they like as we have to do what we like" (p. 352). On the 17th, even as Gandhiji was congratulating the people at a public meeting on the perfect calm which they had so far preserved despite provocation, in another part of the city a mob had started molesting people who had not joined the boycott. He was far more deeply humiliated by this outburst of violence than he had been by the disturbances in April 1919 (*vide* Vol. XV). In a letter written on the same day, he said: "We have had a foretaste of swaraj. I have been put to shame" (p. 461). Two days later, he issued an appeal to the citizens in which he confessed: "The swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils" (p. 466). And he added: "You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality" (p. 467). By way of penance and reparation, he undertook an indefinite fast till the different communities in the city made peace with one another.

Gandhiji was soon enabled to break the fast, but the political atmosphere in the country had been sufficiently vitiated, from his point of view, to force him to abandon the mass civil disobedience for which intensive preparations had been going on in selected areas in the country. But, although Gandhiji was inclined to hold his hand, the Government seemed to have decided to force the issue. Volunteer organizations were disbanded in Bengal, in the U.P., the Punjab and Delhi; nationalist newspapers were suppressed and national leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and C. R. Das, the President-elect of the forthcoming session of the Congress at Ahmedabad, were arrested in quick succession. Gandhiji urged the people to take up the challenge. Speaking at Ahmedabad on October 29, he said: "Now we do not have even two full months. The Congress will be meeting on December 25. If we do not have the flag of swaraj unfurled by that time, what will be the use of having convened the Congress?" (P. 360)

The preparations for the session of the Congress at Ahmedabad bring out the down-to-earth practicality of Gandhiji. His instructions in respect of shoe-parking, lavatories, urinals, drink-

ing water, lighting, language-wise kitchens, etc., in *Navajivan* (pp. 50-2 and 144-6) reveal his attention to the minutest detail even when he was occupied with problems of gigantic magnitude.

In another context he warns us against the neswpaper reports of speeches. "In spite of all the goodwill in the world, reporters have rarely succeeded in reporting my speeches correctly. Indeed the best thing would be not to report speeches at all, except when they have undergone revision by the speakers themselves. If this simple rule were followed much misunderstanding could be avoided" (p. 537).

Though the writings included in this volume are necessarily dominated by political issues, others which reveal more intimate aspects of Gandhiji's personality are not wanting. The account of his tour of Assam (pp. 53-8 and 84-91) is touched by a poetic sense of discovery, and reveals Gandhiji's unfeigned joy in the beauty of physical nature and his delight in the simplicity of unsophisticated human nature. The social problem of the "fallen sisters" in Barisal overpowered him with shame at the thought of the crime perpetrated by man against woman. "As the picture of these sisters grows more vivid in my mind, the thought strikes me, —what if they had been my sisters or daughters? Why this 'if'? They are so indeed" (p. 94). In a self-sufficient statement on Hinduism as he understood it, he described his attachment to it with the winning frankness of an essayist: "I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know" (p. 249).

He found at the end of the year that his message of swaraj through the constructive programme of self-purification had met with no response and that he had reached only the ear of the people and not pierced their heart. "Should I not kneel down in all humility before my Maker and ask Him to take away this useless body and make me a fitter instrument of service?" (P. 458) But the mood soon passed, and the serenity of Gandhiji's faith survived the painful disillusionment of his passionate hope for a regenerated India by the end of the year. The one year's time-limit which he had set for the attainment of swaraj served only to involve the people more closely in the spiritual *sadhana* whose ful-

filment was the pre-requisite for attaining political freedom. He had laid down easy conditions and had told the people: "Fulfil these conditions and win swaraj" (p. 557). As for himself, he was no atheist and, therefore, no pessimist. "Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj? If she sincerely desires swaraj, let her fight for it and get it" (p. 331).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text have generally been spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and generally printed with indent. Indirect reports of speeches and passages which are not by Gandhiji have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews, slight changes have sometimes been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from the Gujarati or Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where translations were available, these have been used with minimum necessary changes to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is printed within square brackets giving reasons where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

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CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. UNTOUCHABILITY

I have received so many comments on Shastri Vasantram's letter[1] giving his interpretation of untouchability that it would take up too much space to publish them all. However, I regard these comments as a good sign. Everyone of the correspondents wants the issue to be determined on a religious and philosophical level. Their comments show that they will not be satisfied with a purely pragmatic solution of the problem. If Hindu society, though providing *Antyajas*[2] with all facilities, continues to look upon them as untouchables even if they take a bath after coming into contact with filth, these fundamentalists would regard it as unbearable and sinful. These correspondents are not reformers. They do not believe that all that is ours is bad and all that is European is good; they are men of moderation. They look upon themselves as Hindus and take pride in the fact. They attach the utmost importance to self-restraint. I am overpowered with joy at this and, in their uncompromising attitude, I see an early deliverance from the sin of untouchability.

We occupy ourselves so much with hair-splitting discussions about what the Shastras mean that, instead of turning dust into corn we turn corn into dust, cling to the bran and leave the grain, run after insipid whey and forget the butter. The letters lying around me indicate that we are about to leave behind the age of songs and enter the age of action. There are four castes, and not five. The practice of untouchability is not evidence of self-restraint, it is not a restriction inherent in the caste system. To regard as untouchable those also who are outside the pale of the caste system is not the way of compassion but of hard-heartedness. The soul is never polluted by the touch of the leper; on the contrary, if such contact is inspired by a spirit of service, it is elevated. Service of the *Bhangi*[3] is dharma; compassion lies in nursing an ailing *Bhangi* before others. If such a *Bhangi* has been engaged in sanitary work, to take a bath [after contact with him] is simple hygiene and is absolutely necessary, but failure to do so does not threaten one with spiritual ruin. There can be sin in

[1] Published in *Navajivan*, 17-7-1921

[2] Etymologically, "last-born" lowest on the social scale; traditionally charged with sanitary duties

[3] One of the communities attending to scavenging work

rers do not get more than this. For such work, one should have a hardy constitution. But the spinning-wheel can be used by any weak-bodied girl and she can, if she will, earn two annas daily. No other aspect of non-co-operation has produced the same effect on the people as the spinning-wheel movement. Some have come to worship it as a means of profitable employment. It has become popular among all classes, among both Hindus and Muslims. If it does not come to be universally accepted and if, by means of it, we do not succeed before September 30 in producing all our requirements of cloth and cannot, in consequence, boycott foreign cloth, that will be solely due to our lack of organizing ability and efficiency.

WEAVERS' MEETING

There is a small town in Bihar called Bihar Sharif. It has a population of 25,000. The well-known Tirthankar Mahavira Swami[1] was born, and also died, in its neighbourhood. There are majestic temples here, on the way to Bihar Sharif. The place is known as Sharif because it is associated with a famous Muslim saint. The place, they say, is esteemed second only to the shrine of the Pir in Ajmer. There are about five hundred weavers living here. Most of them are Muslims. The Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee held a special meeting of the weavers. All of us pleaded with them at this meeting and they have agreed to use in the future exclusively hand-spun yarn for weaving, and mill yarn only if they must. Till now, they have been using foreign yarn exclusively, though they themselves told me that their forefathers used only hand-spun yarn. From now on, if these weavers are supplied good hand-spun yarn, they will most certainly use it to the exclusion of other yarn. If no enthusiastic workers come forward, they will as certainly continue to use foreign yarn even though they have agreed to use hand-spun yarn. Our task now is to persuade weavers, carders, carpenters, blacksmiths and others to take interest in public work. I hope that in every town of Gujarat, Congress workers will get in touch with such artisans, enrol them as members and secure their services. Let us not mind if they earn well; we should be satisfied if only they give preference to public work and charge for such work at a little less than the prevailing rate.

[1] Last of the line of seers whose teachings evolved into Jainism

GREAT "YAJNA"[1]

Renouncing the use of foreign cloth is a great *yajna* in which we are engaged. Swaraj lies in our being completely successful in it. We need not, however, feel anxious how such a mighty task can be accomplished within a month; for anyone who is distracted by fear loses his wits, feels dizzy and cannot see his way. If we reflect, we shall see that swaraj is quite easy to win, for it is our birthright. So, assuring ourselves that swadeshi must be easy, we should give ourselves up wholly to the work. To do this, we should have determination and be industrious. The more I tour the country, the more I see that the easiest way for us is to weave in our own homes the cloth we require. It is much easier to teach everyone how to spin and weave, sitting in his own home and living in his own town, than to assemble vast numbers at one place and use their labour. As Shri Amubhai has shown, the task which, even if we proceed at a fast pace, we shall take not less than 25 years to accomplish through mills, we can, given conviction, accomplish in 25 days. But just as anyone starting to cook a meal cleans his utensils first, so also should we cleanse ourselves of the filth of foreign cloth. Unless we do so, our lethargy will not leave us. As a man who has been rendered incapable of walking for some time is afraid of giving up the support of the stick even after he is cured and limps for fear of falling down, we too shall not be able to stand on our feet as long as we lean on foreign cloth for support.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 21-8-1921

3. TO THE PEOPLE OF BIHAR

TEZPUR,
ASSAM,
Bhadrapada Krishna 4 [August 22, 1921][2]

The faith and devotion of the Biharis are beyond description. I know well your love for mother cow. You are the admirers of Tulsidas[3], supreme among devotees. You follow the religion of compassion. There is only one golden way of saving mother cow:

[1] Sacrifice
[2] Gandhiji was in Tezpur on this date.
[3] Great Hindi poet; author of the Hindi epic, *Ramacharitamanasa*

you should help your Muslim brethren in saving that other cow which is the Khilafat. Conquered thus by love, our Muslim brethren can save the cow. Our religion does not teach us that in order to save an animal we should take a human life. We should sacrifice our own lives for the life we wish to save. Our religion calls it *tapascharya*. We can follow religion only through *tapascharya*. *Tapascharya* emerges out of compassion and in compassion alone is dharma.

How can we say anything whatever to others so long as we have not rid ourselves of sin? Do we not kill cows with our own hands? How do we treat the progeny of the cow? What crushing burdens do we not lay on bullocks! To say nothing of bullocks, do we give enough feed to the cow? How much milk do we leave for the calf? And who sells the cow [to the butcher]? What can we say of the Hindus who do this for the sake of a few rupees? What do we do about it?

Cows have always been slaughtered for English soldiers. What have we done about it? Taking all this into account, why should we be angry with our Muslim brethren who slaughter cows considering it a matter of religion? The least we can do is to clean our soiled hands.

It was a great mercy that on the day of *Bakr-i-Id* our Muslim brethren maintained complete calm, were very considerate to us and, so far as they could, refrained from slaughtering cows. We are grateful to them for this.

But it is necessary to make sure that this is so in future years also. Therefore we should give up [eating] goat's meat, etc. If we do this, the price of these animals will go down and the price of cows will rise. We should make the very trade in cows impossible. We can do all this only when in our work we show discrimination, compassion, reason and self-sacrifice.

You have great faith in religion. Living in the sacred land which produced Janaka, Buddha and Mahavira, holding to patience and your religion, you can do great work and show to the whole of India the righteous path which will lead to the saving of mother cow.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Hindi]
Hindi Navajivan, 2-9-1921

4. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

TEZPUR,
Silence Day [*August 22, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV[2],

I hope you have received my letters. You too must have written to me, but no letter has reached me so far. If you had been with me in Assam, your gift for poetry would have got sufficient food. But we are not born for enjoyment in this land of duty. We have, therefore, to draw what poetry we can from Assam and Prayag[3] both.

The following itinerary is very nearly correct.

23	Jorhat
24-25	Dibrugarh
27	Silchar
28-29	Sylhet
31-1	Chittagong
3rd	Barisal
4th	Calcutta

We shall be staying in Calcutta for about ten days. We may have to go to Bolpur for a day during that time.

Other news you will find in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11422

5. STATEMENT ON REPRESSION IN PRINCELY STATES

[Before *August 25, 1921*]

In the course of my journey to Gwalior, I was shocked to see that people at stations shrank even from approaching our train. On platforms there was no swadeshi cloth to be seen at all. In this State the non-co-operation movement has been completely stopped. Wearing a khadi cap or possessing a charkha is regarded

[1] Gandhiji left Tezpur on the 22nd in a boat and reached Jorhat *via* Nowgong on August the 24th, instead of the 23rd.

[2] 1892-1942; Gandhiji's secretary for 25 years

[3] The addressee was at Prayag, i.e., Allahabad.

with disfavour—it is in fact considered an offence. I firmly believe that the Maharaja Sahib's thinking cannot be so mean. My sympathy is wholly with the Maharaja. The poisonous influence of the Government is nowhere so marked as it is in the Indian States. For while the States can effect no reforms of any kind, they are frequently made to strike at the liberty of their subjects. Besides, under the aegis of the Government they have also become, along with the rest of India, weak and irresponsible. Therefore, if a self-willed ruler wants to tyrannize over his people, he can give even more trouble than the Viceroy. This is the greatest defect in the present administrative set-up. I hope that much of what I have been told at the Gwalior Station is exaggerated and that the repression carried on here is not as terrible as it is reported to be.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 25-8-1921

6. NOTES

Non-co-operation in Andhra

I am writing these notes at Mr. Mazharul Hak's[1] Sadakat Ashram in Patna situated on the banks of the Ganges. I have always considered Bihar to have done the best for non-co-operation. Andhra I have put next. But it is difficult to say which Province will do better. Anyway the local Government are certainly assisting the people in their discipline. This is what Mr. Konda Venkatappayya says in his latest letter:

> In my last letter I informed you that after the arrests of myself and three merchant friends of mine, the pleaders of this city resolved to boycott the courts till the 31st December. After our release the Bar at Bapatla, the next important town in this district, has also resolved to do the same. Mr. Prakasam[2] and myself are proceeding to other stations in this district to have the courts similarly boycotted by the pleaders. The city of Guntur has one District Court and two Sub-courts besides two District Munsif's Courts and several Magisterial Courts. In Bapatla there is a Sub-court and two District Munsif's Courts. At present all these courts stand abandoned except by a few. We hope to have the courts in

[1] A leader from Bihar; one of the founders of Muslim League; later, its president; gave active support to Gandhiji in Champaran

[2] T. Prakasam (1856-1957); editor, *Swarajya*; was called "Andhra Kesari", lion of Andhra; first Chief Minister of composite Madras State

other stations in this district similarly abandoned. Arbitration boards to hear and dispose of both original suits and appeals have been formed and the first sitting of these courts will commence the day after tomorrow (i.e., Monday, the 8th instant). It is aimed to have all the suits and appeals now pending in the courts to be withdrawn from the British courts and referred to the arbitration courts. After regular establishment of parallel courts and the paralysation of the administration of justice in the British courts in this district, I have every hope that other districts will soon follow the example. Our aim is to complete this work in our district and next proceed to other districts if they do not begin to do it themselves in the meanwhile.

The merchant community in this district, particularly in this city, have had a remarkable awakening. On the day of Lokamanya Tilak's[1] anniversary almost every one of them wore the new swadeshi clothes and attended the procession and the meeting. The cloth merchants here are willing to deal in swadeshi cloth, provided they are shown a way to dispose of the foreign goods now in stock with them. In the whole of this district, there is 29 lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn. Of this, about half is got from Indian mills. In this town of Guntur, the merchants have with them three lakhs worth of foreign cloth and yarn. They are willing to re-export the stock to any place outside India, and to deal solely in swadeshi cloth and yarn.

I therefore request you kindly to refer me to some friends in Bombay who may be willing to inform me as to what the cloth merchants in Bombay propose to do with their foreign stock, and if there is any way of helping our merchant friends here to get rid of their stocks without loss to them by export to places outside India.

I hope that the enthusiasm of the pleaders will prove true and lasting. This boycott of law-courts even by way of protest will do good to them and the country. Regarding the difficulty of the merchants, all I can advise them is that they should themselves devise a method of sending out the stock through the principal dealers. I wish, too, that the merchants in Bombay will come to the assistance of the dealers throughout India and try to re-export as much stock as is possible. But supposing no arrangement is arrived at, the dealers in foreign cloth and yarn should not force the sale of their stock but sell only to customers who insist on buying foreign cloth. I do not expect that the whole of India will all of a sudden understand and accept the duty of renouncing the use of foreign cloth. There is still more than a month left

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920); political leader, scholar and writer; *vide* also Vol. II, p. 380.

and much can be done during that time if no further purchases of foreign yarn or cloth take place.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Mr. Saiyad Mahammad, President, Khilafat Committee, Unnao, writes as follows to the editor:

> I have read with pain and anxiety occasional remarks in your paper about the Mussulmans not joining the Congress. It is a matter for regret that the Hindu leaders in districts generally feel a sort of estrangement from their Mussulman neighbours and both the Hindu and Mussulman workers in small districts are fired with the ambition of personal advertisement and claim a superiority which is the most dangerous poison to real unity. The result is that the Hindu workers hardly take any active part in the Khilafat movement, and the gulf thus gets wider. The Congress Committees are doing nothing so far as the propaganda work is concerned, and they think that their work is quite different from that of the Khilafat Committees. This evil in small districts is most deplorable, and in spite of my most earnest endeavours to bring about a complete union, matters have not gone beyond a surface unity. Once the Hindus understand and realize this power of unity, I can confidently say that the cow sacrifice in this district will be reduced to almost nothing. Our great impediment is their aloofness.

I should be very sorry, indeed, if the Hindus of Unnao are apathetic to the Khilafat cause. I have no doubt that the more interest the Hindus take in the Khilafat, the nearer comes swaraj. Let us not ignore the fact that it is not yet possible to induce Mussulmans to take interest in swaraj except in terms of the Khilafat. It is sad but it is true. The two communities have remained so long estranged; the Mussulmans had unconsciously almost come to think that India was not their home. The peril to the Khilafat has opened their eyes. The Hindus can take note of the fact, help their Mussulman countrymen and help themselves, and thus for all time cement Hindu-Muslim union. Happily for both, whatever may be true of Unnao is most certainly not true of many other places where the Hindus are doing all they can to help the Khilafat movement. There can be no real progress if the awakening is not general among both the communities.

TAMIL SISTERS AGAIN

A South Indian lawyer sends me the following note:

> Khadi is not as widely used in the Tamil province as in the other provinces, mainly because the womenfolk do not wear it. The spinning-

wheel is not much in evidence for the same reason. Plain white cannot be worn by married women here. They can only wear dyed saris. In former times cotton was the only wear of ladies. Now, except by the poorest, cotton saris are discarded, and silk saris form the daily wear. Silk saris were at first locally manufactured at Koranadu (near Mayavaram) and later on at Conjeevaram, and dyed with Indian dyes. They cost from Rs. 10 to 30. They were only occasionally used. Lately the market has been exclusively captured by Bangalore saris dyed with German or English dyes, the least of which costs about Rs. 50. This presses on the poor Brahmin householder, especially as he has to clothe the members of his family only with these; and when it is the daily wear, he has to go in for a number of them. On marriage occasions the minimum cost of a sari fit for presentation is above Rs. 100. Many a decent family is ruined by a marriage, mostly on this account. This ruinous habit, which was confined to the Brahmins, has spread among other classes also.

Besides the question of expense, there is the other aspect of comfort and convenience. Silk is non-absorbing and heavy, and working or cooking in it is martyrdom. It is always hot here except for one or two months of the year. There is also the peculiar insanitary habit of not washing the more costly saris lest they should lose colour and get crumpled. The perspiration and smell emitted are awful.

Many a householder on the verge of ruin would feel grateful to you if you would bring about a return to economy, simplicity and comfort.

I hope the workers in Madras will deal with the evil complained of in the correspondent's letter. I dread my forthcoming visit to Madras. I share the correspondent's feeling that the Tamil woman is over-fond of her silk sari. There is no more unwholesome garment than silk in a hot climate like that of Madras. And one hundred rupees for a sari is a criminal waste of money in a poor country like India. Men are no better, for they are proud of their hand-woven puggrees, dhotis and *upamas*, little thinking that the yarn used for these things is all foreign. Strange as it may appear, absorbent khadi is cooler than the fine garments which are so prized by men. I am hoping, however, that my faith in the spirituality of Tamilians will be realized even in the difficult matter of swadeshi, and that they will perceive the spiritual necessity of complete renunciation of foreign cloth and return to the charkha. In the melting plains of Madras and Andhra, I can imagine no industry so helpful as the gentle-moving charkha. Dravida land is responsible for sending out the largest number of emigrants to a life of servility and exile. Restoration of the charkha automatically solves the difficult problem of enforced emigration.

Land alone cannot support the poor peasantry of India even if there was no assessment to be paid.

Practising Lawyers

Letters continue to pour in regarding practising lawyers holding offices in Congress Committees. Ever since my arrival in Bengal, the question has been still more pressingly put to me. An ex-student from Dhubri writes to ask whether I expect the movement to succeed under the leadership of practising lawyers. I cannot conceive the possibility of the movement, which is one of self-sacrifice, succeeding if it is led by lawyers who do not believe in self-sacrifice. I have not hesitated to advise that electors rather than be ably led by such lawyers should be content to be more humbly guided. I can certainly imagine a brave and believing weaver or cobbler more effectively leading than a timid and sceptical lawyer. Success depends upon bravery, sacrifice, truth, love and faith; not on legal acumen, calculation, diplomacy, hate and unbelief.

The Bread Problem

The same student says that many Bengalis cannot do national work or leave slavery because of the bread problem. It is not so much the bread problem as the bread-labour problem. We the educated classes have lost the art of labouring for our bread. With the wages of weavers, carders and spinners rising daily, there is certainly no bread problem. Any man who weaves for eight hours a day may earn even at the commencement at least one rupee per day. Accomplished weavers today earn two rupees per day. We must not think of earning a livelihood by deskwork merely.

Non-violence as a Policy

His last question is the most important of all.

> Do you hope, that this non-violent war which is based on love and soul-force will succeed with those who take it merely as a matter of policy? Pure non-violence necessitates more courage and love of country. But as a weapon of the weak, it will breed fear in the face of coming repression.

The questioner has partly answered the question himself. Non-violence may succeed, even if it is adopted as a matter of policy rather than creed, if it is combined with courage and real love for the country or the cause. Hatred of the wrongdoer does not necessarily mean love of the country. Our difficulty arises from the fact that many people make a pretence of non-violence without

believing in it even as a policy. The Ali Brothers[1] believe in it purely as a policy, but in my opinion there are no two truer believers in non-violence as a policy than they. They do believe that violence can only hurt the cause, and that non-violence if extensively practised can entirely succeed. A man who honestly practises truth as a policy certainly gains its material results, but not the one who feigns truth.

Voluntary Obedience

If we are to achieve swaraj during this year, we must show signs of its coming in every department of life, most of all in the working of Congress organizations. Unless we conform to laws and rules that we ourselves now make, we are not likely to do better when we have attained swaraj. The Treasurer bitterly complained to the Working Committee at its last meeting that several provincial committees had not yet sent in 25 per cent of their collections. Some were reported to be withholding because other provinces had not made their returns. On the contrary, I would suggest that each province should vie with every other in being most exact in discharging all its obligations. Thus and thus only may we expect to become self-governing, and command respect for our demands. If the Congress organizations are to work efficiently, all the instructions of the Working Committee should be faithfully and promptly carried out. The Committee has come to the decision that not less than one fourth of the total provincial collections should be devoted to swadeshi, i.e., hand-spinning and hand-weaving. Twenty-five lakhs is not a large sum to spend throughout India, if we are to cope with the demand for khadi. Indeed the more a province spends on this head, the better it will have done.

Christians and Non-co-operation

An Indian Christian from Basrah North writes:

> I am sorry to say that you do not take us Indian Christians as the people of India, as I have seen many times *Young India* mentioning Mussulmans, Hindus, Sikhs, etc., but omitting the Christians.
>
> I should like you to believe that we Indian Christians are also the people of India, and take much interest in India's own affairs.
>
> I am sure, there are very few who have followed non-co-operation as Indian Christians have. I have much sympathy for my motherland's affairs. I am also a follower of non-co-operation.

[1] Mahomed Ali (1878-1931) and Shaukat Ali (1873-1937); prominent leaders of the Khilafat movement

I promise to give some news about the state of Indians in Mespot now and then.

I assure the correspondent and other Indian Christians that non-co-operation is no respecter of creeds or races. It invites and admits all to its fold. Many Indian Christians have contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are some noted Indian Christians as non-co-operators in the front rank. There is constant mention of Mussulmans and Hindus, as they have hitherto regarded one another as enemies. Similarly there always has been some cause when any race has been specially mentioned in these columns.

My Ambition

A persistent correspondent from Simla asks me whether I intend to found a sect or claim divinity. I have answered him by a private letter. But he would have me make a public declaration for the sake of posterity. I should have thought that I had in the strongest terms repudiated all claim to divinity. I claim to be a humble servant of India and humanity, and would like to die in the discharge of such service. I have no desire to found a sect. I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following. For I represent no new truths. I endeavour to follow and represent Truth as I know it. I do claim to throw a new light on many an old truth. I hope that this declaration will satisfy my inquirer and others like him.

Young India, 25-8-1921

7. A MOCK TRIAL

I have already dealt in a previous issue[1] with the disgraceful behaviour of a Karachi crowd on 25th July last upon the receipt of the news that Swami Krishnanand, a popular preacher, reformer and the soul of the picketing movement in Karachi, was arrested tried and sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment inside of three hours. The court house was surrounded by the military, and the trial took place practically with closed doors. The Swami was arrested on the 20th but set free after an hour's detention. He was without a warning re-arrested on the 25th on the same charge. He was charged with having assaulted a constable

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, p. 463.

"in the discharge of his duty". Prof. Vaswani[1] who was in touch with the Swami and who was present, at the court, testifies[2] that the Swami never assaulted the constable, but that on the other hand, he, the Swami, was fairly severely assaulted by the latter for having refused to move on whilst he was engaged in a conversation with a friend. The crowd believed implicitly in the innocence of the Swami. And in its madness, it selected every European passer-by and everyone with a European hat for venting its wrath. Among the Europeans assaulted was Mr. Price, M.L.A. Whatever the provocation, however great the Swami's innocence and whatever his status, the crowd had no business to lose temper. Victory is impossible until we are able to keep our temper under the gravest provocation. Calmness under fire is a soldier's indispensable quality. A non-co-operator is nothing if he cannot remain calm and unperturbed under a fierce fire of provocation. We must lie on the bed chosen by us. We must not expect the Government to remain calm in all circumstances. It has its creed as we have ours. It is calm up to a point. It will sit still so long as we seem to play. Its creed is to strike terror immediately we are serious. The Swami and his following were serious, and the Government delivered the blow. It was at this stage that our creed was put upon its trial and we failed. It is true but it is irrelevant, that Prof. Vaswani and other staunch workers tried to curb the fury of the mob and even partly succeeded and prevented worse things from happening. The fact that matters very much is, that the crowd lost self-control at all. There was no occasion for it to gather. Having gathered it ought to have remained cool-humoured throughout. It was entitled to vent its anger by discarding all foreign cloth, by making up its mind to turn to weaving and picketing liquor shops. That would have been a death-blow to the Government. As it was, its impotent rage was very near a death-blow to the movement for which the crowd ostensibly stood.

There should be no mistake. There is no civil disobedience possible, until the crowds behave like disciplined soldiers. And we cannot resort to civil disobedience, unless we can assure every Englishman that he is as safe in India as he is in his own home. It is not enough that we give the assurance. Every Englishman and Englishwoman must *feel* safe, not by reason of the bayonet at their disposal but by reason of our living creed of non-violence. That is the condition not only of success but our own abi-

[1] T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind; author; founder of Mira Educational Institutions, Poona

[2] In his letter to Price; *vide* Appendix I.

lity to carry on the movement in its present form. There is no other way of conducting the campaign of non-co-operation.

Let us bear the Swami's farewell message in mind: "Carry on the anti-liquor campaign and help the *Bhangi*." He could not have delivered a better message. If we banish liquor and raise the *Bhangi* to our level, low as it is, we are very near swaraj.

Of course the Sind authorities have lost their head. I see proclamations prohibiting people from walking where and as they like, from carrying anything but walking-sticks.

The European residents too have lost self-control. I do not wonder. They are a handful in the midst of many. Prof. Vaswani wrote a dignified letter of sympathy to Mr. Price, regretting the incident. He had met Mr. Price before. Mr. Price wrote a splenetic letter in reply. Prof. Vaswani wrote again. Mr. Price was still angry. I reproduce elsewhere two typical letters out of the interesting correspondence that passed between the two, — one from Mr. Price by no means his worst, and one from Prof. Vaswani calm and dignified. The latter is also valuable as a cogent statement of a non-co-operator's position.

The lesson of the "mock trial" as Prof. Vaswani has truly called it and the aftermath, is that we must expect more mock trials as the heat of non-co-operation grows and the closing months approach, and that we must be prepared calmly to face the imprisonment of innocents without retaliation and fury, or we must be prepared to court well-deserved disaster. It will be a cruel pity, if, when we are so near the cherished goal, we should ail back by our inability to control crowds.

Young India, 25-8-1921

8. *CHIRALA-PERALA*

Chirala-Perala is in fact one village not far from the sea, with a nice climate and containing a compact population of about 15,000. The place is situated in the Andhra Province, and possesses in Mr. Gopal Krishnayya a talented and self-sacrificing leader, who has by his perseverance and sacrifice been able to hold the people together without difficulty. Municipal government is a transferred department. The minister in charge began last year to make his presence felt by these brave people. A vexatious trading licence was imposed upon them. They retorted by trading without a licence. The result was a prosecution and convictions against the resisters, who, including an old woman, went to jail.

The Government has been endeavouring to impose a municipality on the people, who protested against the measure. But what could a minister who had accepted office in the teeth of public opposition do but seek to impose his will upon the people and show that he cared little for it?

Let us see what the municipality meant to the people; certainly not better sanitation, for the place was unusually well kept by the people themselves; certainly not more education, for the people were non-co-operators. It meant more taxation, more interference with their liberty. This was an intolerable evil for the people.

They therefore decided to remove to a bare place of ground near by, outside the municipal area. They erected huts there for residence and evacuated Chirala-Perala about May last. Nothing daunted, the minister has sought and received the assistance of the Revenue Department which has levied penal cesses in respect of the sheds on the ground that they were erected on Government waste. The rate for each shed is Rs. 10-2-6, whereas the value thereof is only Rs. 25. If this payment is not made, the occupants have to vacate the sheds.

The commencement of repression is thus described in its note by the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee:

> In the repression at Chirala-Perala, the roll of honour is lengthening. Already 12 men and one woman have served out their term of imprisonment for refusing to pay the municipal taxes. Three men are now undergoing rigorous imprisonment in the Central Jail at Rajamahendri, six more are awaiting orders of incarceration. It is extraordinary that these six were sentenced to imprisonment nearly a month ago and the sentence held in abeyance. We have not heard of any other instance in which convicted persons are quietly told that they might go home and await orders, not even bail bonds being taken from them. Many more in Chirala-Perala are prepared to fill the prisons. The struggle is being carried on with remarkable vigour and persistence, though the dislocation of business caused by the evacuation and the loss of living in the case of poorer inhabitants have entailed serious hardship.
>
> The property of the convicted persons has been attached and brought to sale a number of times at Bapatla and at Guntur for realizing the amount of fine levied on them. But no bidders have come forward in either place. This is an eloquent testimony to the sympathy generally felt for the sufferings of the Chirala-Perala patriots.

Here we have a concrete instance of the meaning of the reforms and responsibility. I doubt not that the minister believes that

what he is doing is good for the people. Did not the English officials, whenever they imposed anything on us even the Rowlatt Act, seek to justify the imposition on the ground of public weal? What non-co-operation is fighting among other things, is the spirit of patronage. We must have the liberty to do evil before we learn to do good. Even "liberty" must not be "forced" upon us. The democratic spirit demands that a most autocratic minister must yield to a people's will or resign office. He must be patient enough to carry enlightened public opinion with him even in the most perfect measures of amelioration.

The brave people of Chirala-Perala have challenged the Government to do its worst and refused to have a municipality. They need not have done so. They might have waited for swaraj. But they chose to do otherwise. The responsibility is entirely theirs. They may not now yield in any circumstance whatsoever. Nor must they under provocation lose their heads. They must cheerfully let the Government subject them to any penalty it chooses to inflict upon them. By their meek and unyielding suffering they will cover themselves and India with glory, and will give an object lesson to the country in non-violence.

Young India, 25-8-1921

9. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

DIBRUGARH [ASSAM],
August 25, 1921

CHI. MANI[1],

I have been carrying your last letter with me from place to place. It seems to me a tough job to convert your uncle Vithalbhai. At his age, it is difficult for him to adopt a different line of work, especially as he thinks that he has been successful with his own way of fighting.[2] We can only have patience, agree to differ from him and go our own way.

I hope the boycott[3] and the work of khadi production over there are going on apace. Assam impresses one as altogether a different kind of land. I have given the more interesting part of the tour in *Navajivan*[4] and will not, therefore, write about it here.

[1] Daughter of Vallabhbhai Patel

[2] Membership of legislatures

[3] Of foreign cloth

[4] *Vide* "Experiences in Assam-I", 4-9-1921 and "Experiences in Assam-II", 11-9-1921.

I have had a talk with Bhai Indulal[1]. I wish to have a heart-to-heart talk with Kumudbehn[2] and comfort her. This will depend on her willingness and my leisure. I do not think I shall be able to go there before October. I trust you and your brother[3] are giving plenty of help to father in his work. He has a heavy burden to carry and, God willing, he will be able to cope with it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall be in Chittagong and Barisal from the 31st to the 3rd and in Calcutta from the 4th to the 12th.

BEHN MANIGAURI
C/o VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL[4], BAR-AT-LAW
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne

10. SPEECH AT DIBRUGARH

[August 25, 1921][5]

BROTHERS,

This is our last night in Assam. Tomorrow we shall leave for Chittagong. We have by now said everything to the Assamese that we had to say. And now before I proceed further I should like you to tell me how many tea plantation workers are here. If my voice reaches you, these workers who are here may raise their hands. I see that there are very few workers present at this meeting.

I had hoped to be able to meet our working brethren here. I have spent at least twenty years of my life among workers in Africa. In India also wherever I go I keep in touch with the work-

1 Indulal Yagnik; an active political worker from whom Gandhiji took over *Navajivan*

2 Wife of Indulal Yagnik

3 Dahyabhai Patel

4 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat who became the first Deputy Prime Minister of India

5 Gandhiji was in Dibrugarh on this date; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

ers. I do not know what the condition of the working class in Assam is. Tomorrow I shall have a talk with the representatives of planters. But I had hoped that before that I should be able to have a heart-to-heart talk with the workers. The mission on which I came here has occupied my time so completely that I was not able to go to the tea gardens and speak to the workers. I shall ever regret this. But I am also comforted by the thought that if God grants me success in the task that I have undertaken it will not be necessary to go to the workers. The sufferings of the Indian people have to be mitigated or swarajya will have no meaning. Our swarajya should be such that the humblest man or maid working in a tea plantation can freely go from Kashmir to Cape Comorin without a single ruffian teasing them; otherwise it would be no swarajya. The struggle that is going on started because the British rule has done India no good. I cannot get entangled any more in petty things. For a time I had thought that love would put everything right. But the experience of the Punjab and the injustice committed against Muslims in the name of justice have convinced me that in no other regime would such tyranny be possible. And since then I have called this a Satanic regime.

If we wish to remove this Satanism, if we wish to mitigate the suffering of the workers and stop the atrocities inflicted on women, there is no power that can prevent us.

If we had not lacked faith in God this stark poverty would not have descended on India.

Our struggle does not spring from enmity. But we cannot accept anyone's overlordship. *We accept no one except God as our Lord and Master*. This is the meaning of swarajya. It is heinous to love a regime where untruth reigns, barbarities are perpetrated, and false despatches are sent. We therefore seek no justice from its courts and do not wish to have our children educated in its schools and colleges. This is called non-co-operation. We do not incite anyone to rioting. We can achieve swarajya prayerfully and peaceably and heal the wound of the Muslims.

We must understand thoroughly what self-purification means. Give up drinking alcohol, smoking ganja and eating opium. Give up visiting prostitutes. I am well acquainted with the habits of workers. You cannot live comfortably on your wage of eight or nine rupees a month. You drink in order to forget your misery. But the simplest remedy for misery is that, while you should put up with suffering, you should [not] put up with any unjust punishment that a tyrant may inflict on you. India has not yet understood this principle fully. The day I am persuaded that India

has learnt this, the country can become free. Today India lacks the power for peaceful, civil disobedience of laws. I hope we shall have this power by October. But this power will not come through drinking and debauchery. Therefore give up drinking, give up debauchery. This has a very deep meaning. If you would rather have nothing to do with dirty things, you should become pure yourselves.

We do not realize how our country has fallen through foreign trade—even more than it has by drinking and opium. We have not looked at the evil and sin there is in it. My brother Andrews[1] asks me why I burn English cloth, while there is a famine in Khulna. We do not realize what a crime it is to wear foreign cloth. For self-purification, and for showing the world what self-purification is, it is necessary to give up foreign cloth. If India can do this, it can become free by October.

I humbly beseech my Marwari brethren of Dibrugarh that, if they wish to serve Assam, if they wish to serve dharma—and I know that they are keen to serve dharma and they love it—they should give up using foreign cloth.

I am sorry that there has been no proposal to perform, during this our last night here, the sacred task of burning foreign cloth. It is a sad thought that Dibrugarh could not perform this *yajna*. Do you shrink from burning even dirt?

If you wish to end the sufferings of workers, if you wish to guard the chastity of women and the ancient culture of India, then burn foreign cloth. Why do workers have to come here [to Assam] from such great distances? The only reason I can see is that they have given up the charkha. Even the peasants have given it up. Then the land does not produce enough. So a million people from outside have come into Assam. This is an indication of our sin.

I shall close my speech with a prayer to God to grant us strength to give up foreign cloth and guard the honour of our women.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 9-9-1921

[1] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary who took great interest in Viswabharati University founded by Tagore; his devoted services for many years in the cause of the Indian people won him the name "Deenabandhu", brother of the poor; he was deeply attached to Gandhiji.

11. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ON THE WAY TO SILCHAR,
Saturday [August 27, 1921][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

We have crossed the border of Assam, as the province is defined by the Congress and are now entering the Surma Valley. The scene too has changed. We thought of you often during our voyage on the Brahmaputra. But do we always get, and can we always eat, the food we relish? There have been no letters at all from you. As a matter of fact, we have received no mail after we left Gauhati, and I am afraid we may not get any till we reach Calcutta. We may just manage to reach there on the 4th. Annapurnadevi's address is: Chataparru, Ellore, Madras Presidency.

Please send me the address of Esther Faering[2] if you remember it.

I am anxious to have news of your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11412

12. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,
ASSAM,
August 30, 1921

EVENT[3] COMING. HAVE GUJARAT DAY'S HARTAL, LABOURERS JOINING AFTER LEAVE. WEDNESDAY THURSDAY CHITTAGONG SATURDAY BARISAL SUNDAY AND AFTER CALCUTTA.

Bapuna Patro-2 : Sardar Vallabhbhaine

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921.

[2] A Danish missionary who came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram; Gandhiji treated her as his daughter.

[3] Visit of the Prince of Wales

13. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SYLHET,
ASSAM,
[*August 30, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. I have sent you a telegram[2] today; a copy of it is enclosed. If we have the necessary strength, I for my part would suggest that there should be a hartal in Ahmedabad, but only so long as the Prince is there, care being taken to see that poor people get all the provisions they need. In the event of such a hartal being observed, martial law is likely to be proclaimed. We should face it and meet death if it comes to that. But I do not think we are ready for this; we haven't yet the necessary strength. We should, therefore, rest content with what we can do. We should tell the people how they could dissociate themselves from the visit. The Municipality should have as little to do with it as possible. No one may salute the Prince and, if he visits Government schools, the boys may not rise from their seats. If we are strong enough for such action, we should organize picketing outside his office and prevent people from seeing him. We can think of many more ways of showing our displeasure without being rude. All these we may adopt and make our attitude known to the public. My advice is that we announce the full boycott programme right now and start training the people to act peacefully but firmly. We must have the strength to make it impossible for the Prince to parade his position in Ahmedabad.

More than this I cannot say from this distance. Only, I would ask you not to undertake anything beyond your capacity. It is essential to avoid failure. Apart from this, if there is any possibility of a breach of the peace following determined opposition by us, please do not make any attempt to carry out my suggestions.

It is in the fitness of things that you have accepted the Chairmanship of the [Congress] Reception Committee. Such honours

[1] As given in the source on the basis of the post mark

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

will not turn our heads when service of the people is our only aim in life.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

14. SPEECH TO RAILWAY WORKERS, CHITTAGONG

August 31, 1921

(The workers of the Assam-Bengal Railway had gone on a strike to serve no selfish interest but to secure to the labourers who had abandoned the tea plantations justice for the cruelty which they had suffered at Chandpur. The Government had beaten up and driven them from the railway station, and refused to help them to return to their home towns. This had hurt the railway workers. They had no common bond with the plantation labourers. The latter hailed from Bihar and other provinces whereas most of the railway workers came from Bengal. Their strike, thus, had no element of self-interest in it. I met these strikers at Chittagong. I told them what they should do. Notes of that speech were taken down. Since some of the ideas are likely to prove useful, I publish the summary here believing that, though it is not complete and I have not been able to revise and abridge it, the speech may be read with profit.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI)

I thank you all for the address which you have presented to me; but I do not wish to detain you long over expressions of gratitude.

I shall not enter into a detailed discussion whether it was proper or improper on your part to have gone on a strike and continued it for so many months, because I am not in possession of all the facts. I know only what I heard yesterday after coming here. It is not possible for me to express any opinion on the basis of that limited knowledge. You must have already heard from some of your leaders what I wrote in *Young India* about the Assam-Bengal Railway strike. In that article also, I did not express any opinion since I did not have enough information to form one. I did not know your circumstances, your grievance. I did not know whether you had sufficient justification for striking work;

and I do not know that even now. I can see, however, that your strike, unlike other strikes, is not motivated by self-interest. You have struck work not for any rise in wages but for the sake of others. You have gone on a strike to express your sympathy for the sufferings of your brothers as a result of the atrocities at Chandpur. I did not imagine that workers in India had become strong enough to go on a strike out of concern for other people's sufferings. This is not true of the entire working class, but in your case, I am told, you have struck work only out of sympathy with the sufferings of your brethren.

And if that is the reason why you have gone on strike, it becomes your duty not to return to work, any of you, until the hardships of plantation labourers have ended, until they get justice.

When can we say that their hardships have ended? When can it be said that justice has been done for the atrocities committed at Chandpur? Only when the Government expresses regret, apologizes for the beatings and pays the labourers the railway-fare which it refused under pressure from the planters. The Commissioner who ordered Gurkha soldiers to throw out from the railway waiting-sheds, in the middle of the night, poor and exhausted working men and women and their children, was born in India and is one of us. He should be ashamed of himself. He should, on his own, offer an apology.

You can return to work only when all this is done. If the Government acts thus, one may not mind the railway company not paying you for the strike-period on the ground that you had given no notice The railway company might employ you as if you were fresh recruits, it may tell you that you will be employed as and when vaca cies arise and may even stipulate new service conditions, —you may submit to all this, but only after the Government yields. As long as the Government refuses to bend, you ought not to return to work no matter what they offer you or how hard they try to win you over.

You should not go down on your knees even if the Congress Committee does not help you with funds or your leaders desert you. Why should a person, who can work with his hands and feet, have to go down on his knees? Such a man ought to remain independent and not rely on others for anything. Whether it is I or the Congress Committee, if any leader deserts you after having advised you to go on strike, you must not waver. I have read the notice which was served on you yesterday. It says:

> Many of you have now returned to work. The rest of you also should report for duty immediately. We are advising you in your own interest. Some irresponsible leaders incited you to go on this strike and have now deserted you. Do not be misled by them any more. If you delay returning to work, you will lose your jobs too.

You need not be frightened by this notice. You are not going back to work; do not mind those who have returned. They have acted unworthily; you should preserve your honour.

Times change and one age succeeds another. This one belongs to the weavers. You can stand on your own feet if you adopt this profession. Do not think that this work will not solve your problem. Weavers can today earn twice as much as others. Those of you, moreover, who wish to go back to your villages may do so, your fares will be paid to you. You may live there, till your piece of land and spin during spare hours. Apart from this, you may do any other work of your choice and become self-supporting. If all of you belong to Chittagong, here also you can combine farming and weaving as I have suggested and thereby make Chittagong the pride of India. It is not at all difficult to do this. God is most merciful and just. A man can learn to spin within three days, carding is also easy and even weaving can be mastered within a month if properly attended to. There is one thing, of course. Railway employees habitually take bribes or steal. If you wish to have your bread without working for it, you will write to me the very next day that you cannot go on with weaving. If however you are willing to work and if you work for twelve hours daily, you will be positively writing to me within a month that the way suggested by me has made you self-supporting and that now you fear no one except God. It is not hard to work for twelve hours a day. I am an old man, I do not have much energy now, and yet I can work that long. Why, then, cannot you young men do so? If you work hard and live a thoughtful life, you will know God, for a man who does not possess good character, who drinks and visits prostitutes, cannot work strenuously for twelve hours. You cannot expect maintenance from the Congress Committee but, since you have struck work, you can ask for spinning-wheels. The spinning-wheels will provide you maintenance. You should continue your strike with the help of the spinning-wheel, offer love and sympathy to those who suffer and, as long as this Satanic Government does not yield, let none of you go back to work.

For not less than thirty years now I have lived in the closest contact with labourers. Even when I was practising, I accepted generally working men's briefs. I lived with them, moved with them and slept and ate with them. I have conducted a number of strikes before now. I consider myself an expert in conducting strikes. With God's grace, I succeeded in all of them, the only reason being that I advised workers to stand on their own feet. I refused to support them by raising funds. Why should a man, sound of body and limb, feed himself with money from another? I most certainly would not seek financial assistance from my brother or my friend if I should happen to lose my job or if my business is ruined. I would seek my brother's help only when I was ill or incapacitated. When there was a strike by forty thousand men and women in South Africa, I straightway wired to Mr. Gokhale[1] to tell him that he should not worry at all and that there was no need to raise funds in India and send the money there. As long as there was no money, things went on very well; it was only when funds started flowing in that difficulties arose. The workers secured their demands. We did not have to continue the strike for as long as six months. It was called off within a few weeks on a settlement being reached. The strikers used to get one *roti*[2] and an ounce of sugar daily. On this ration, they walked twenty miles every day. Their women and children also accompanied them.

That one was a very big strike. Compared to it, your strike is a very small affair. During that strike large numbers submitted to beatings and assaults without so much as opening their mouths. Not less than ten thousand people walked into jails without uttering a single syllable. Among the ranks of the strikers were many hefty Pathans. Once a Pathan working in a coal-mine came to me and bared his back before me. It was all sore and swollen. He told me he had received the blows without the slightest movement of his body, that the tyrant had all but skinned him alive; but he submitted to it all because of the pledge he had taken before me in the name of God. Were it not for this, how dare the man beat him, he asked. He could have crushed the like of him in no time.

I told him that he was indeed a brave man. And, in that strike, he was not the only Pathan who behaved in this way. There were

[1] G. K. Gokhale (1866-1915); founder of the Servants of India Society; President, Indian National Congress at Benares in 1905

[2] Flat, round unleavened bread

many others like him. Some persons who had served terms of imprisonment for theft or murder had also joined the strike. All of them, however, had only one thought in their minds, that the pledge they had taken had to be honoured even at the cost of their lives. All of them were brave people. I want you to be equally brave. I ask you, once again, not to look to the Congress or depend upon it. God has given us teeth and He is sure to provide us food. This land of Bengal is so very fertile. You have abundant rains here. Nature is all smiles upon you. Why should people here at all die of hunger? How can people here be anyone's slaves? They should be completely free. If they so choose they can, this very day, win freedom for the whole of the country. I feel ashamed to think that, when there is famine in Khulna, they should approach merchants in Bombay for money and that the Khulna people can be fed only if the money is forthcoming.

Let us think what needs to be done now. Either all of you go back to your villages and find out for yourselves some means of livelihood, or you set up some sort of a corporation of your own. If you wish to go back to your villages, the Congress Committee should pay you the fare for the journey. I would, however, advise you to set up a corporation. As one fighting for swaraj, I would ask you to card, spin and weave. After a month of training, you will earn from this work one rupee daily. The greater your skill the more you will earn. By taking up this work, you will also be serving the nation. Your family members will then cease to be liabilities since they too can lend a hand in this work. Moreover, your courage will have an effect on public opinion and those who have deserted you may again join you. This will of course need determination. Our forefathers laid great stress on honouring one's pledge. Dasharatha said that the tradition of Raghu's descendants enjoined them not to break a pledge, even if that meant losing one's life.

Many of you have returned to work with the Railway; they are ignorant, weak men. You should not abuse them; nor should you employ force to compel them to give up their jobs again. That will not be right for you. If you refuse to go back on your pledge, silently keep up the strike and earn your bread by spinning and weaving; if you live a godly life, they will themselves feel ashamed; public opinion will make them feel so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1921

15. NOTES

Lovely Assam

I am writing these notes at Tezpur on the banks of the mighty Brahmaputra. Tezpur was known as Shonitapur and is reputed to have been the capital of the demon Banasur, whose daughter Usha was married to Aniruddha[1]. Devotees can point out the place where Hari[2] and Hara[3] fought. Assam is a land of magnificent vegetation. Some of the river scenery is hard to beat throughout the world. I have seen the gorgeous scenery on the Thames. But I cannot recall anything as superior to the lavishness with which nature has decorated the great stream on whose banks I am writing these notes.

Upper Assam alone has a population of over 37 lakhs. Every woman of Assam is a born weaver. No Assamese girl who does not weave can expect to become a wife. And she weaves fairy tales in cloth. Some of the old patterns that our host Mr. Phooken showed me were of matchless beauty. And as I saw these beautiful patterns, I could not help shedding a silent tear over India's past glory and her lost art. Where is to be found in all the fine rich foreign saris in India, that beautiful blending of soft colours so pleasing to the eye? The vegetable dyes of Assam are almost extinct. When Assam became a British possession, its women ceased to spin and sinfully took to weaving foreign yarn. And now, what the women of Assam are saving through weaving, they are losing through buying foreign yarn. And the saris I see today are not anything to be compared to the old patterns I have seen for beauty or softness. Assam, if its workers do their duty, can play a most important part in developing swadeshi. Its women can weave much more than enough for themselves. Forty thousand acres are under cotton cultivation today, an acre yielding on an average 133 lbs. But of course Assam can grow much more. Some of the cotton I saw was very beautiful and long-staple. And fine spinning is still in existence in isolated homes as in Andhra. Every one admits that the Assamese have ample time at their disposal. I have elsewhere reproduced an extract from an English writer's observation confirming the view. Assam has plenty of wood, sound

[1] Grandson of Lord Krishna

[2] Vishnu, the preserver

[3] Siva, the destroyer

and durable, just the kind for making spinning-wheels. Let us hope that Assam will rise to its full height in the matter of swadeshi.

The Assamese are cursed with the opium habit, but the movement against vice has spread throughout the length and breadth of India. I am told that many people have given up the habit altogether and that abstinence is on the increase.

I understand that some Government officials have made use of a slip I have committed in my booklet *Hind Swaraj*, in which I have bracketed the Assamese with the *Pindaris* and other wild tribes.[1] I have made ample amends to the people. It was certainly on my part a grave injustice done to the great Assamese people, who are every whit as civilized as any other part of India. They have a fine literature some of which is written on bark of *agaru* tree with beautifully coloured illustrations said to be very old. And of course I fell in love with the women of Assam as soon as I learnt that they were accomplished weavers. Being weavers, they have used economy in their dress without impairing its beauty or its efficiency as cover. And to me it is a sign of very high culture to see the Assamese women and girls wearing little or no jewellery. They are like women all over India naturally shy and modest with extremely refined and open faces.

My stupidity about the Assamese rose, when about 1890 I read an account of the Manipur expedition, when the late Sir John Gorst defended the conduct of the officials towards the late Senapati, saying that governments always liked to lop off tall poppies. Being an indifferent reader of history, I retained with me the impression that the Assamese were *jungli*[2] and committed it to writing in 1908[3]. However my slip has afforded consolation to some officials, amusement to my audience before which I corrected the slip, and a splendid opportunity to me of paying a tribute to the simple and natural beauty of the Assamese sisters and of enlisting them on the side of India and swadeshi.

I must not omit to mention the fact, that out of nearly seventy-eight Assamese pleaders, fifteen have suspended practice, probably the highest percentage throughout India.

Lastly, I must congratulate the Congress Committees on the excellent order preserved at all the meetings. All rush and noise have been avoided with wonderful discipline.

[1] *Vide* Vol. X, p. 25, footnote 6.
[2] Uncivilized
[3] Slip for 1909

Officiousness

The officials in Assam are evidently unused to large demonstrations and gatherings. They have forbidden to the demonstrators the use of public grounds. The Nowgong officials however positively irritated the people. The Deputy Commissioner would not allow a little platform with a canopy to be erected on the football ground, and after having allowed its use had it dismantled because, he said, the chairman of the committee was guilty of a breach of faith in that he had erected the platform. The committee in disgust held the meeting on private ground. Nor was this all. The Deputy Commissioner endeavoured to control the attendance at the railway station and wanted the names of the chosen few who were to go to the platform. He would not allow any procession for fear of disturbance. As a matter of fact, the crowds have been nowhere so restrained or well-behaved as in Assam, even in the demonstration of their affection. And any experienced official could have seen, that affectionate demonstrations, no matter how noisy, could not possibly end in trouble or mischief. But Assam is a place, where, I understand, officials will not tolerate any awakening among the people. Only the other day, at Tezpur, an official summarily and forcibly had certain quarters evacuated by the residents, because their buffaloes interfered with his sport. Another official during the war period carried fire and sword among a little border tribe called *Kukis*, and slaughtered them like goats, sparing neither women nor children. I understand, that the whole of this shameful massacre was suppressed from the public, though it is common knowledge among the people. No wonder that in Assam things have been carried so far, that its permanent capital is 4,000 feet above the sea-level. It has no capital on the plains at all. Shillong is, I have been told, to all intents and purposes a European settlement. And the Government never descends from its inaccessible heights.

A Municipal Model

The Raipur (Central Provinces) Municipality has adopted by a majority the following proposals:

> That all the boys reading in the municipal schools should have the national uniform of khadi coat or *kurta*[1] and khadi cap from the 1st August, 1921.

[1] Long shirt

That the 1st August 1921 should be declared a holiday in all the municipal schools and offices in honour of the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

That this Committee expects its servants to use country-made cloth.

That all dresses supplied to múnicipal servants should be of khadi.

It is a wise use the Raipur Municipality has made of its powers. Indeed all the municipalities can carry out all the constructive permanent features of non-co-operation without being wholly non-co-operationist. There is not one among the foregoing proposals, to which reasonable exception could possibly be taken by anybody. Any municipality which adopts swadeshi, the vernacular of its province as the medium of its proceedings, the amelioration of the suppressed classes, the abolition of the drink-traffic, prostitution and such other things, will assist the work of national purification, and thus justify its existence.

How to Kill Swadeshi

We are familiar with the official ban put upon the khadi cap in various parts of India. In Bihar, I heard that a magistrate actually sent hawkers to sell foreign cloth. Mr. Painter of Dharwar fame has gone one better, and has issued an official circular in which he says:

> All officers subordinate to the Collector and District Magistrate are desired to take steps to make people realize, that inasmuch as India produces less than her population requires, a boycott of foreign cloth and its destruction or export must inevitably lead to a serious rise in prices, which may lead to a serious disorder and looting, and that these consequences will be the result, not of any action on the part of Government but of Mr. Gandhi's campaign.

In two other paragraphs means are indicated of combating the swadeshi propaganda, i.e., by holding meetings, and by dealers who are opposed to boycott attending the Collector's Office at stated hours. The Madras Government have issued a still more pedantic circular. The meaning of these circulars is obvious. Pressure is to be put upon the dealers and others not to countenance boycott. The subordinate officials will take liberties which the authors of circulars may not even have contemplated. Fortunately for the country, these threats now produce little or no impression upon the public, and the swadeshi movement will go on in the teeth of the official opposition, be it secret or open, unscrupulous or honourable.

The officials are so ignorant and obstinate, that they will not take the only effective course for avoiding the feared "disorders and looting", viz, making common cause with the public and stimulating production. Instead of recognizing the agitation against foreign cloth as desirable and necessary, they regard it as an evil to be put down. And then it is complained, that I call a system which seeks to thwart healthy public agitation, Satanic. Why should there be any dearth of indigenous cloth? Is there not enough cotton in India? Are there not enough men and women who can spin and weave? Is it not possible to manufacture all the required number of wheels in a few days? Why should not each home manufacture its own cloth, even as it cooks its own food? Is it not enough in times of famine to distribute uncooked grain among the famine-stricken? Why should it not be enough to distribute raw cotton among those who need clothing? Why this hypocritical or false alarm about the dearth of cloth, when it is possible in India to manufacture enough for India's needs in a month even without the aid of the mills? The people have been purposely or ignorantly kept in the dark hitherto. They have been wrongly taught to believe, that all the cloth needed cannot be manufactured in India's homes as of yore. They have been figuratively amputated and then made to rely upon foreign or mill-made cloth. I wish the people concerned will give the only dignified answer possible to these circulars. They will forthwith burn or send out all their foreign cloth, and courageously make up their minds to spin and weave for their own requirements. It is incredibly easy for everyone who is not an idler.

Bogus Advertisements

I continue to receive complaints about bogus advertisements in swadeshi. The Manager of Satyagraha Ashram who has handled almost all the so-called improvements and inventions, writes to say that he has lately received an advertisement from Calcutta, which beats all previous record. He is of opinion that as yet nothing has been found to beat the original charkha in simplicity, ease or output, and warns all spinners against investing in any of the new designs. He advises all Congress Committees to scan all such advertisements in their respective jurisdictions, and after giving each machine at least a month's trial to pronounce an opinion upon these designs. Whilst swadeshi is taking root, fraudulent inventions are bound to come before the public. Congress Committees therefore must guide it in all such matters.

A Tuni correspondent writes to say, that Bombay buyers have gone to Andhra Desha to buy fine cloth. He says, that in spite of his warning, cloth woven out of foreign yarn was sent by some merchants from Bezwada. He warns all buyers against buying such cloth. He says that practically all swadeshi stock is exhausted. The moral is of course clear. "Beware of fine cloth." Fine hand-spun yarn cannot be had in abundance, and therefore it is best for Congress workers to avoid buying fine khadi. As Shrimati Sarojini Naidu[1] said at Farrukhabad, it is better to cover ourselves with leaves than to wear foreign cloth. Those who are fired with such a spirit will not fall into the dangerous trap of fine cloth as yet. A time will soon come, when there will be no dearth of fine hand-spun that is capable of being woven.

A Seasonable Publication

Dr. Syed Mahmud of Patna has rendered a service to the Khilafat by bringing out his booklet on the Khilafat and England. It is easy reading, and makes out for the busy man a fairly complete case for the Khilafat. Dr. Mahmud has been careful to support every one of his propositions by copious extracts. He proves the treachery of British ministers from their own writings and speeches. He has had no difficulty in showing that England, even when she was regarded as Turkey's friend, was a friend out of necessity, because she was Russia's foe. The history of England's relationship with Turkey has been one of betrayal, of secret treaties hostile to Turkey's interests, the brave and trusting Turks always believing in England's promises. Here are Lord Palmerston's reasons for the support of Turkey in his days: "We support Turkey for our own sake and for our own interest." When these very sound reasons ceased, Turkey was sold. It was at the time of the Berlin Congress of 1877, that the secret leaked out that Britain had exacted the cession of the island of Cyprus from Turkey. Disraeli and Salisbury, the two English plenipotentiaries, kept the secret from the Congress, although they were under an obligation to disclose it. "They stood convicted of nothing less than a direct and recorded lie!" Did the discovery lead to the return to Turkey of Cyprus? Not at all. England placated outraged France by recognizing the latter's right at the first convenient opportunity to occupy Tunis, by recognizing her special interest in Syria and giving an equal share to her in the financial spoliation of Egypt.

[1] 1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji

No wonder Mr. Blunt has said: "To the Cyprus intrigue are directly or indirectly referable half the crimes against Oriental and North African liberty our generation has witnessed." Dr. Syed Mahmud traces the treacherous dealings of England regarding Egypt, Tripoli and the Balkan War, and shows clearly, that Turkey was practically driven out of the alliance with England. Is it any wonder that no Mussulman trusts British ministers' friendly professions? They will forfeit all title to be called followers of Islam, if they rest themselves before compelling England to do the right thing by Turkey and India.

Punjab Prosecutions

Maulvi Saiyad Habib has been sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for three years, avowedly for his writings in his paper, the *Siasat*, but in reality for the influence he exercises over the Mussulmans. Mr. Zafar Ali Khan's son, Mr. Akhtar Ali Khan, and his cousin, Mr. Gulam Kadar are under trial. The conclusion is foregone. Thus every Mussulman and every Sikh non-co-operator of note is to be put "out of harm's way". They would not apologize, they would not withdraw anything for there was nothing to withdraw. Disaffection in their writings certainly there was. But a non-co-operation journal to be worthy of the name has to preach disaffection. I therefore congratulate these gentlemen upon their well-earned honour. I can only hope, that the Mussulmans and the Sikhs will appreciate the Government action by completing their part of the swadeshi programme. The people will have deserved these trials and convictions, if they generate enough power to be able to discharge these friends from jails long before their period is over.

An Indictment

A friend has sent me a copy of the notice served on Pandit Radhamohan Gokulji of Nagpur, calling upon him to file security for good behaviour or to go to jail. The Pandit is safely lodged in jail. But I have before me the extracts that were attached to the notice, and said to be from his speeches delivered at various times. I have read and re-read the extracts. I now present them to the reader in the order in which they were given in the notice:

Speech Dated 20th June 1921 at Seoni

1. We are fighting against a tyrannical Government. See . . . how long can the tyrant Government . . . prosecute us? The Western people . . . are not Christians.

2. Unless all the jails in India are full of Indians, you cannot achieve your object. To the last child . . . let the struggle for liberty be continued.

3. When the Romans were ruling over England, they became cruel and supercilious. Once they . . . whipped Queen Boadicea; the result is, where is Rome today?

4. Close the slave houses (schools) of the Satanic Government.

5. In the face of two laws, one for Indians and another for Europeans, we cannot help remarking, the Government are dishonest and wish ill to the people.

6. So long as you are fighting against the tyrant Government, do not produce children.

SPEECH DATED 21ST JUNE 1921 AT SEONI

1. He then referred to the non-co-operation movement, by means of which a bloodless revolution could be caused, this oppressive system of Government could be broken and swaraj attained.

2. It is our duty to destroy a Government, which is capable of acting so dishonestly.

3. What did we get in return for the money and men we gave to the bureaucracy? The Rowlatt Act which provides neither for appeal nor for argument.

4. Imperial preference is being forced on us today. We cannot buy at a cheaper rate outside the British Empire, nor can we sell at a better price to an outsider.

5. The laws on which our very honour depends are made and discussed in a foreign language . . . at a distance of thousands of miles. We are certainly not bound to obey such laws.

6. You should be prepared to undergo transportation and to get yourself beheaded like Robert Moore.

7. Do you deserve to be called human beings, if you do not consider it your duty to destroy that ill-born Government, which has caused sticks to be introduced into the private parts of women?

SPEECH DATED 5TH JULY 1921 AT NAGPUR

1. The sinful British Government taught the Chinese to smoke opium and Indians to drink (alcohol).

2. The Government . . . cut up the Turkish kingdom but left European kingdoms intact.

3. The Indian (Marwari) traders are dacoits who rob for the benefit of the bigger dacoits.

4. The British and Japanese Governments are cousins and both are devilish. As the British imprisoned people, so the Japanese executed non-co-operating students in Korea.

5. The Government is so sinful, that its sins will recoil on its own head and it will perish like the Roman and the Egyptian Empires.

There is in the foregoing extracts nothing, that hundreds of speakers including myself have not said on various occasions and from a thousand platforms. There is only one sentence to which an objection may properly be taken, and that is No. 7 in speech No. 2. The charge does occur in the statements made before the Congress Committee. But it is against individuals and not against a whole corporation. The Government could not properly be described to have "caused" the infamous barbarity, as the Government can be said to have made India crawl on her belly in that lane in Amritsar. But it is not for the inaccuracy or the over-colouring that the Pandit has been sentenced. His is a severe but accurate indictment covering eighteen charges in three speeches. And almost every one of them can be sustained. The speaker has been impartial in his condemnation, as shown by his reference to the Marwaris and the Japanese. It must moreover be remembered, that the speaker spoke in Hindi, and the extracts are given without their context. The lesson, however, for us workers is to continue to do our work fearlessly and earn imprisonment, even as Pandit Gokulji and many others have done.

The Nagpur Pleaders

The pleaders of Nagpur have done well through the ordeal to which its Sessions Judge subjected them. He required non-co-operating pleaders to show the consistency between their suspension and their oath as lawyers. All of them said, that they had suspended in obedience to the Congress call. Mr. Mahomed Samiulla Khan added, that his declaration of allegiance was subordinate to allegiance to God and His Prophet, which latter nothing could override. Mr. Narayanrao T. Vaidya said, that times had very much changed, that the oath of allegiance would have to be changed to suit the circumstances and that otherwise no self-respecting lawyer would care to practise in any British Court. The lawyers deserve congratulations on their fearless attitude. Times are indeed gone, when people could be frightened into slavish submission. Man does not live by bread alone. He has at his disposal a sustenance far richer than the richest bread can afford.

Young India, 1-9-1921

16. NATIONAL EDUCATION

So many strange things have been said about my views on national education, that it would perhaps not be out of place to formulate them before the public.

In my opinion the existing system of education is defective, apart from its association with an utterly unjust Government, in three most important matters:

1. It is based upon foreign culture to the almost entire exclusion of indigenous culture.
2. It ignores the culture of the heart and the hand, and confines itself simply to the head.
3. Real education is impossible through a foreign medium.

Let us examine the three defects. Almost from the commencement, the text-books deal, not with things the boys and the girls have always to deal with in their homes, but things to which they are perfect strangers. It is not through the text-books, that a lad learns what is right and what is wrong in the home life. He is never taught to have any pride in his surroundings. The higher he goes, the farther he is removed from his home, so that at the end of his education he becomes estranged from his surroundings. He feels no poetry about the home life. The village scenes are all a sealed book to him. His own civilization is presented to him as imbecile, barbarous, superstitious and useless for all practical purposes. His education is calculated to wean him from his traditional culture. And if the mass of educated youths are not entirely denationalized, it is because the ancient culture is too deeply embedded in them to be altogether uprooted even by an education adverse to its growth. If I had my way, I would certainly destroy the majority of the present text-books and cause to be written text-books which have a bearing on and correspondence with the home life, so that a boy as he learns may react upon his immediate surroundings.

Secondly, whatever may be true of other countries, in India at any rate where more than eighty per cent of the population is agricultural and another ten per cent industrial, it is a crime to make education merely literary and to unfit boys and girls for manual work in after-life. Indeed I hold that as the larger part of our time is devoted to labour for earning our bread, our children must from their infancy be taught the dignity of such labour. Our children should not be so taught as to despise labour. There is

no reason, why a peasant's son after having gone to a school should become useless as he does become as agricultural labourer. It is a sad thing that our schoolboys look upon manual labour with disfavour, if not contempt. Moreover, in India, if we expect, as we must, every boy and girl of school-going age to attend public schools, we have not the means to finance education in accordance with the existing style, nor are millions of parents able to pay the fees that are at present imposed. Education to be universal must therefore be free. I fancy that even under an ideal system of government, we shall not be able to devote two thousand million rupees which we should require for finding education for all the children of school-going age. It follows, therefore, that our children must be made to pay in *labour* partly or wholly for all the education they receive. Such universal labour to be profitable can only be (to my thinking) hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But for the purposes of my proposition, it is immaterial whether we have spinning or any other form of labour, so long as it can be turned to account. Only, it will be found upon examination, that on a practical, profitable and extensive scale, there is no occupation other than the processes connected with cloth-production which can be introduced in our schools throughout India.

The introduction of manual training will serve a double purpose in a poor country like ours. It will pay for the education of our children and teach them an occupation on which they can fall back in after-life, if they choose, for earning a living. Such a system must make our children self-reliant. Nothing will demoralize the nation so much as that we should learn to despise labour.

One word only as to the education of the heart. I do not believe, that this can be imparted through books. It can only be done through the living touch of the teacher. And, who are the teachers in the primary and even secondary schools? Are they men and women of faith and character? Have they themselves received the training of the heart? Are they even expected to take care of the permanent element in the boys and girls placed under their charge? Is not the method of engaging teachers for lower schools an effective bar against character? Do the teachers get even a living wage? And we know, that the teachers of primary schools are not selected for their patriotism. They only come who cannot find any other employment.

Finally, the medium of instruction. My views on this point are too well known to need re-stating. The foreign medium has caused brain-fag, put an undue strain upon the nerves of our

children, made them crammers and imitators, unfitted them for original work and thought, and disabled them for filtrating their learning to the family or the masses. The foreign medium has made our children practically foreigners in their own land. It is the greatest tragedy of the existing system. The foreign medium has prevented the growth of our vernaculars. If I had the powers of a despot, I would today stop the tuition of our boys and girls through a foreign medium, and require all the teachers and professors on pain of dismissal to introduce the change forthwith. I would not wait for the preparation of text-books. They will follow the change. It is an evil that needs a summary remedy.

My uncompromising opposition to the foreign medium has resulted in an unwarranted charge being levelled against me of being hostile to foreign culture or the learning of the English language. No reader of *Young India* could have missed the statement often made by me in these pages, that I regard English as the language of international commerce and diplomacy and therefore consider its knowledge on the part of some of us as essential. As it contains some of the richest treasures of thought and literature, I would certainly encourage its careful study among those who have linguistic talents and expect them to translate those treasures for the nation in its vernaculars.

Nothing can be farther from my thought than that we should become exclusive or erect barriers. But I do respectfully contend, that an appreciation of other cultures can fitly follow, never precede an appreciation and assimilation of our own. It is my firm opinion, that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has. We have not known it, we have been made even to deprecate its study and depreciate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An academic grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists under pain of civil suicide upon imbibing and living my own.

Young India, 1-9-1921

17. ETHICS OF DESTRUCTION

The reader, I am sure, will appreciate my sharing with him the following pathetic and beautiful letter from Mr. Andrews:

I know that your burning of foreign cloth is with the idea of helping the poor, but I feel that there you have gone wrong. If you succeed in boycotting all, or a greater part, of foreign cloth, it seems to me self-evident that the price of mill-made cloth will rise and it will hit the poor. But there is besides a subtle appeal to racial feeling in that word "foreign" which day by day seems to me to need checking and not fomenting. The picture of you lighting that great pile, including beautiful fabrics, shocked me intensely. We seem to be losing sight of the great beautiful world to which we belong and concentrating selfishly on India, and this must (I fear) lead back to the old bad selfish nationalism. If so we get into the vicious circle from which Europe is now trying so desperately to escape. But I cannot argue it out. I can only say again, that it shocked me and seemed to me a form almost of violence; and yet I know how violence is abhorrent to you. I do not at all like this question of foreign cloth being made into a religion.

I was supremely happy when you were dealing great giant blows at the great fundamental moral evils, drunkenness, drug-taking, untouchability, race arrogance, etc., and when you were, with such wonderful and beautiful tenderness, dealing with the hideous vice of prostitution. But lighting bonfires of foreign cloth and telling people it is a religious *sin* to wear it, destroying in the fire the noble handiwork of one's fellow-men and women, one's brothers and sisters abroad, saying it would be "defiling" to wear it—I cannot tell you how different all this appears to me. Do you know I almost fear now to wear the khaddar that you have given me, lest I should appear to be judging other people as a Pharisee would, saying, "I am holier than thou!" I never felt like this before.

You know how, when anything that you do hurts me, I must cry out to you and this has hurt me.

I wrote *The Modern Review* articles which I have enclosed with such eager joy, because I felt certain that I had found your own life's meaning. But now my mind cries out to you that you are doing something violent, distorted, unnatural. . . . You know that my love is stronger than ever, just as your love for your brother was when you felt he was doing something wrong. Do tell me what you mean. What you said in *Young India* about burning[1] did not convince me a bit.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 432-3.

It is so like him. Whenever he feels hurt over anything I have done (and this is by no means the first such occasion), he deluges me with letters without waiting for an answer. For it is love speaking to love, not arguing. It is the outpouring of an anguished heart. And so it has been over the burning of foreign clothes.

What Mr. Andrews has put in loving language, correspondents already out of tune with me have written in coarse, angry and even vulgar words. Mr. Andrews' being words of love and sorrow have gone deep down in me and command a full answer, whereas the angry ones I was obliged to lay aside save for a passing reference. Mr. Andrews' being non-violent, charged with love, have told. The others being violent, charged with malice, took no effect and would have evoked angry retorts, if I was capable of or disposed to such retorts. Mr. Andrews' letter is a type of non-violence we need in order to win swaraj quickly.

This is however by the way. I remain just as convinced as ever of the necessity of burning. There is no emphasis in the process on race feeling. I would have done precisely the same thing in the sacred and select family or friendly circles. In all I do or advise, the infallible test I apply is, whether the particular action will hold good in regard to the dearest and the nearest. The teaching of the faith I hold dear is unmistakable and unequivocal in the matter. I must be the same to friend and foe. And it is this conviction which makes me so sure of so many of my acts which often puzzle friends.

I remember having thrown into the sea a pair of beautiful field-glasses, because they were a constant bone of contention between a dear friend[1] and myself. He felt the hesitation at first but he saw the right of the destruction of a beautiful and costly thing, a present withal from a friend. Experience shows that the richest gifts must be destroyed without compensation and hesitation if they hinder one's moral progress. Will it not be held a sacred duty to consign to the flames most precious heirlooms, if they are plague-infected? I can remember having broken to bits, when a young man, the loved bangles of my own dear wife, because they were matter of difference between us. And if I remember right, they were a gift from her mother. I did it, not out of hate but out of love—ignorant, I now see in my ripe age. The destruction helped us and brought us nearer.

If the emphasis were on all foreign things, it would be racial,

[1] Kallenbach, a German associate of Gandhiji; *vide An Autobiography*, Part IV, Ch. XXX.

parochial and wicked. The emphasis is on all foreign cloth. The restriction makes all the difference in the world. I do not want to shut out English lever watches or the beautiful Japanese lacquer work. But I must destroy all the choicest wines of Europe, even though they might have been prepared and preserved with all the most exquisite care and attention. Satan's snares are most subtly laid and they are the most tempting, when the dividing line between right and wrong is so thin as to be imperceptible. But the line is there all the same, rigid and inflexible. Any crossing of it may mean certain death.

India is racial today. It is with the utmost effort, that I find it possible to keep under check the evil passions of the people. The general body of the people are filled with ill will, because they are weak and hopelessly ignorant of the way to shed their weakness. I am transferring the ill will from men to things.

Love of foreign cloth has brought foreign domination, pauperism and what is worst, shame to many a home. The reader may not know, that not long ago hundreds of "untouchable" weavers of Kathiawar having found their calling gone, became sweepers for the Bombay municipality. And the life of these men has become so difficult that many lose their children and become physical and moral wrecks; some are helpless witnesses of the shame of their daughters and even their wives. The reader may not know that many women of this class in Gujarat for want of domestic occupation have taken to work on public roads, where, under pressure of one sort or another, they are obliged to sell their honour. The reader may not know that the proud weavers of the Punjab, for want of occupation, not many years ago took to the sword, and were instrumental in killing the proud and innocent Arabs at the bidding of their officers, and not for the sake of their country but for the sake of their livelihood. It is difficult to make a successful appeal to these deluded hirelings and wean them from their murderous profession. What was once an honourable and artistic calling is now held by them to be disreputable. The weavers of Dacca, when they wove the world-famous *subnum*, could not have been considered disreputable.

Is it now any wonder, if I consider it a sin to touch foreign cloth? Will it not be a sin for a man with a very delicate digestive apparatus to eat rich foods? Must he not destroy them or give them away? I know what I would do with rich foods, if I had a son lying in bed who must not eat them but would still gladly have them. In order to wean him from the hankering, I would, though able to digest them myself, refrain from eating them and

destroy them in his presence, so that the sin of eating may be borne home to him.

If destruction of foreign cloth be a sound proposition from the highest moral standpoint, the possibility of a rise in the price of swadeshi cloth need not frighten us. Destruction is the quickest method of stimulating production. By one supreme effort and swift destruction, India has to be awakened from her torpor and enforced idleness. Here is what Mr. Allen, the author of the *Assam Gazetteer*, wrote in 1905 of Kamrup :

> Of recent years the use of imported clothing has been coming into favour, —an innovation which has little to recommend it, as the time formerly spent at the loom is not as a rule assigned to any other useful occupation.

The Assamese, to whom I have spoken, realize the truth of these words to their cost. Foreign cloth to India is like foreign matter to the body. The destruction of the former is as necessary for the health of India as of the latter for the health of the body. Once grant the immediate necessity of swadeshi, and there is no half-way house to destruction.

Nor need we be afraid, by evolving the fullest swadeshi spirit, of developing a spirit of narrowness and exclusiveness. We must protect our own bodies from disruption through indulgence, before we would protect the sanctity of others. India is today nothing but a dead mass movable at the will of another. Let her become alive by self-purification, i.e., self-restraint and self-denial, and she will be a boon to herself and mankind. Let her be carelessly self-indulgent, aggressive, grasping; and if she rises, she will do so like Kumbhakarna[1] only to desroy and be a curse to herself and mankind.

And for a firm believer in swadeshi, there need be no pharisaical self-satisfaction in wearing khadi. A Pharisee is a patron of virtue. The wearer of khadi from a swadeshi standpoint is like a man making use of his lungs. A natural and obligatory act has got to be performed, whether others do it out of impure motives or refrain altogether, as they do not believe in its necessity or utility.

Young India, 1-9-1921

[1] Younger brother of Ravana in the *Ramayana*

18. LETTER TO REHANA TYABJI

UNREVISED

CHITTAGONG,
September 1 [1921]

MY DEAR REHANA[1],

I have your sweet letter. Both you and mother are right but I have not a shadow of a doubt that you are more right. Mother has given her worldly wisdom. You have given the dictates of your instinct unspoilt by the bitter experience of the world. Discarded foreign garments cannot be given to the middle class. That will be no swadeshi. If people shunt me by conveniently making me a saint I cannot help. I do not ask the public to do all the things that may qualify me as a saint. I am simply asking them to develop the soldier spirit which is so indispensable for swaraj. If to attain swaraj is to become saints then I want us all to become saints and you may in your own winsome manner bear down the opposition of mother. We must subordinate the *Bania* spirit of calculation and bargain and like soldiers of God do pure sacrifice. The delicate colours and fineness, we had before. And you must work for all that your vanity or taste may need. Today there is only one taste—and that for swaraj and no other. If my argument convinces you I look to you to convince mother and let me know that you have cleared your wardrobe of all rubbish. I reach Calcutta on Sunday and probably remain there till 12th. My address there would be 4, Pollock Street.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9634

[1] Daughter of Abbas Tyabji

19. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

CHITTAGONG,
September 1 [1921]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your long letter written in pencil. I found it difficult to read. Other letters in pencil sometimes come to me and I find them also difficult to read. From this I conclude that my pencil letters too must cause a lot of difficulty to the addressees. I have always felt that it was a crime to write a letter in pencil. However in my difficult predicament, I took that liberty. But I cannot tolerate that crime when somebody else commits it. I know you have committed no crime, for you wanted to keep a copy. It often happens that the first carbon copy is clearer.

I have changed my mind.[1] It would be better for you first to meet me in Calcutta and then send for Durga. If you have decided to stay on there, send a wire to Devdas[2]. But I feel it would be better to do whatever is to be done after we meet and discuss things and am therefore sending you a wire[3] with an altogether different message.

I read about the Malabar incident later. I have already written and despatched an article about it for *Young India*.[4] It would have been better if I had sent you a copy. As to your articles, etc., I shall be able to see them only after I reach Calcutta.

I cannot imagine that either Malaviyaji[5] or the Poet is envious of me. Both lack fearlessness and are proud of their opinions and ideas. You can tolerate pride if it is not accompanied by fear. They cannot look at non-co-operation from our point of view, cannot overlook the shortcomings of non-co-operators, as we do and so may oppose us. Besides, they are confused by the novelty and simplicity of my ideas. To believe anything more than this about them seems to me positively sinful. Bipin Babu[6] and

[1] Gandhiji wrote two sentences and crossed them out, and hence this.

[2] 1900-57; youngest son of Gandhiji

[3] This is not available.

[4] *Vide* "The Two Incompatibles", 8-9-1921.

[5] 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; President, Indian National Congress, 1909 and 1918

[6] Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); educationist, journalist, orator and political leader of Bengal

Vijayaraghavachariar[1] may think all sorts of things about me. Ramakant I consider but a child. He appears to have opposed me to show that he is a man of independent views. We should leave him alone and go on offering our comments as journalists without acrimony. Do point out the Poet's and Malaviyaji's ideas on . . .[2] whenever there is an occasion for doing so. This cannot be done freely in *Young India*, but it can be easily and tactfully done in the *Independent*.

It will be easy enough to have garlands for Indu made of hand-spun yarn.

I have no objection to your taking coffee. It is more essential, to my mind, that you keep fit. I see, and it is my considered view as well, that ordinarily one does not need it. I did not notice any benefit from it when I used to take it. My not taking it now certainly means so much less burden [on the stomach] and less risk of harm.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11418

20. MOPLAH OUTBREAK

Though I am here far away in the north-east at present, I have received some reports of the sudden outbreak of violence in Malabar. I am writing this article on the train, on Friday[3], the *Janmashtami*[4] day. The reader will have the article in his hands after nine days. Meanwhile, further reports will have appeared. But we can discuss some principles on the basis of the reports already received, regardless of whether the facts turn out to be more serious or less.

The Moplahs are Muslims. They have Arab blood in their veins. It is said that their forefathers came from Arabia many years ago and settled in Malabar. They are of a fiery temperament, and are said to be easily excitable. They are enraged and resort to violence in a matter of seconds. They have been responsible for many murders. Many years ago a special Act was also passed to subdue them. There are said to be a million of them.

[1] 1852-1943; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

[2] A word is illegible here in the source.

[3] August 26

[4] Birthday of Lord Krishna

The community, though illiterate, is courageous. They have simply no fear of death. They always set out for fighting with a pledge not to return defeated. That is why it is generally said that the Moplahs think nothing of assaulting or killing anyone. Mr. Yakub Hussain was stopped and later imprisoned because it was feared that they would break out into violence. It is not clear as yet what led to their present outburst. They are reported to have taken the lives of six officers, four Indian and two British. It is believed that some others also may have been killed. Five hundred Moplahs are believed to have been killed. It is also reported that they have resorted to arson and looting. Calicut and some areas to its north are under martial law at present.

Thus, for the time being progress has been arrested in Malabar and the Government has had its way. It is well versed in the art of suppressing such revolts. Many innocent men must have been, and more will be, killed. Who will come forward to blame the Government? And even if anyone does, what is the chance of the Government paying attention to him?

That is a Government which prevents or stops violence. Malabar has demonstrated that we non-co-operators have not yet gained full control. A Government to be worthy of its name should be able to get the people under control. There is only one way in which we can gain such control, and that is through non-violence.

Even if we wish to attain our goal through violence and bloodshed, we should have the strength to carry out our intention. It is needless to consider what we should do in order to acquire such strength, because victory through such means is beyond our wits and capacity to plan.

It is evident, however, that we have departed from the path of peace. We cannot follow both methods at the same time, of peace on one side and violence on the other. If we do, we shall gain success through neither.

It is clear that we have not been able to make our influence felt by the Moplahs. A change of heart has not been brought about in them to such an extent that they will never resort to violence. Their violence is likely to alarm us, it impedes our progress.

Those at any rate who believe that we can win only through non-violence should realize that we shall have to redouble our efforts to preserve peace. We should always remember that we must not, even inwardly, approve of violence.

Other provinces should devote themselves earnestly to their duty. It ought not to be difficult to win swaraj before the end of this year even if only one province makes an all-out effort. I think swaraj during this year is quite within the bounds of possibility if one province at least carries out the non-co-operation programme fully, though other provinces may be slack. But I cannot assert with confidence that we shall win swaraj through the peaceful efforts of one province despite violence in one or more of the other provinces. I see numerous obstacles, but our duty is plain to me. We should exercise stricter self-restraint, become purer, be more alert and make heavier sacrifices. The two forces pull in opposite directions, so that our cart can go forward only when our non-violence is the stronger of the two. If, out of the four bullocks attached to a cart, one either dies or breaks himself loose, the other three have to carry his burden. If, however, one of the four does not die or break loose, but opposes the others or pulls in the wrong direction, the others have not only to carry his burden but also to acquire the strength to prevent him from doing mischief. Thus, the sincere non-co-operator has now a heavier burden to carry.

I see all the time that the most serious obstacles in our path come not from the Government but from ourselves. The former's perversity does not obstruct us as much as our own weakness, our own perversity and our own lack of understanding. We shall be able to raise ourselves if we see through the Government's perversity; our own perversity and our weakness will hold us back. It is rightly said that the *atman*[1] is our only enemy as also our only friend. The complete victory of non-violent non-co-operation will be possible only if we conquer this enemy inside us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

[1] Self; the reference is to the *Bhagavad Gita*, VI.5.

21. PREPARATION FOR CONGRESS

The Congress session will again be held, after many years, in Ahmedabad. This year's session will be quite different from all others. A new constitution, new hopes and a new era! For, if the Congress acts upon the resolution it has passed regarding itself, that is, if the people redeem their own pledge, we shall be assembling to celebrate the coming of swaraj. But can we expect such a happy occasion within four months from now? Can old chains be broken in a second?

The doubt itself furnishes the reply. It certainly takes time for a sick person to recover, but should it be only an illusion of illness which the person is suffering from, it will vanish in a moment if it vanishes at all. No matter when it vanishes, it will do so in a moment. When the time comes for breaking the chains of one who has worn them for ten years, would the act of breaking take any time? It is only a question of our fear leaving us. When the bandage [over a person's eyes] is removed, what else can happen than that he will that very moment be able to see. We would need to think further if the conditions for breaking the chains were of a difficult nature; but there are only three essential conditions : (1) Hindu-Muslim unity, (2) remaining peaceful and (3) swadeshi.

All that is required for the fulfilment of the first two is a change of heart. This requires no big sum of money, or much education or the sword, that is, brute force. But it is not my purpose in this article to argue that we are bound to get swaraj during this year or show how to win it. Its purpose is to examine, from a practical point of view, what Ahmedabad and Gujarat should do to ensure the success of the forthcoming Congress.

Gujarat's duty will be to look after the comforts of the guests. We shall have fulfilled our first and special duty if we extend fitting hospitality to them.

We shall have to attend to arrangements for the guests' stay and their meals, and look to their requirements by way of facilities for bathing, sanitary arrangements and lighting.

This time, we shall provide facilities for one style of living only, and that will be the Indian style. It seems to me that we simply cannot accommodate, on the campus, those guests who wish to live in the English style. We should notify at this very

stage that the Congress is unable to undertake the responsibility of providing accommodation for those who live in perfect English style. It should suffice if we provide them with the names and addresses of hotels.

But we should provide the very best facilities in Indian style. Today, the distinction is between an Indian style of accommodation which is dirty and the English style of accommodation which is clean. On the contrary, the rule should be, the greater the simplicity the greater the cleanliness and the greater the outer pomp the greater the amount of the filth within. But in modern times we associate simplicity with lack of cleanliness. We shall have to give up this attitude.

The arrangements for lavatories are generally very unsatisfactory. We shall have to have a large number of them and the necessary arrangements to keep them clean will have to be made. If we depend for this on the *Bhangis* alone we shall not be able to maintain the degree of cleanliness we should like to. If we have freed ourselves from the sin of untouchability, we should have no objection to cleaning lavatories. Pits will have to be dug to serve as lavatories and, if we keep large quantities of dry earth ready, cleaning them up would be no problem. My suggestion is that we should issue instructions regarding this in Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati and in as many other languages as possible, and these could then be distributed among the delegates.

Bathing arrangements should be planned as carefully as the lavatories. People should be supplied hot or cold water as desired. There should be separate volunteers for this section.

There should be separate arrangements for urinals.

I have often observed that arrangements for drinking water are not satisfactory. We should supply it by means of temporary taps or some other less expensive methods, so that water would be easily available to all. Again, as there should be arrangements to supply water, so there should also be some arrangements for the disposal of the water that may be spilt. In Nagpur we saw pools of water all over the place.

We shall have to think out most careful arrangements for meals as well. The general impression is that the arrangements in Nagpur were relatively good. We shall ourselves have a lot of trouble if we provide separate kitchens for Bengal, Punjab, Madras and each of the other camps. Perhaps the best course would be right now to ascertain from the secretary of each committee their requirements. We know the maximum number of the delegates

that may come from each place, so there should be no difficulty in making the required arrangements.

I should like to make a suggestion right at this stage. All the delegates from Gujarat should become volunteers. We shall, of course, require other volunteers; but our hospitality will shine out if the delegates from Gujarat enrol themselves as volunteers and look into the arrangements, while demanding no service for themselves. We should all convert ourselves into full-fledged volunteers if we do not wish to see any mismanagement.

We should hope that in all one lakh people will attend and hold out promises which will attract such a number.

This time we have only discussed things from the point of view of what will be convenient to us. More in another issue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

22. *MY NOTES*

How to Guard against Being Cheated

Letters are coming in from everywhere telling me that greedy persons have been selling foreign or mill-made cloth by passing it off as khadi and they also put up the price of such cloth. This does not surprise me. When the entire system of government is based on fraud, what else can we expect from people? Go where you will, to law-courts, shops or hospitals, even to legislatures, everywhere you will see cheating. Non-co-operation is intended to save us from this. Our non-co-operation is directed not against individuals but against their misdeeds. There is, however, always the danger, in trying to save ourselves from one kind of sin, of being caught in another. And so long as we like to have cloth like that made in the mills and so long as our cloth is not woven before our eyes, so long the danger of being cheated will remain. The easiest safeguard against this is that every village should produce its own khadi and that people in the cities should buy only such khadi as does not look like mill-made cloth, and that too preferably stamped with a Congress mark. Even if all these precautions are taken, there is no guarantee that there would be no danger of fraud. We have no choice but to put up with this as inevitable. It is worth noting that the complaints of fraud come only from cities. I hope that before long people will stop ordering khadi from Bombay and that, on the contrary, the citizens of Bombay

will order their requirements from neighbouring places. There will be less possibility of fraud in the khadi coming from villages.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 7-9-1921

23. *EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—I*

The Land and the People

I had merely heard the name of Assam. Ever since I read, in England, the story of the invasion of Manipur, I had been under the misapprehension that the people of Assam were backward and uncivilized. This is how I came to describe them in *Hind Swaraj* as being uncivilized. This had hurt the people of Assam. The remark had been fully exploited by the officers. Could the Assamese feel any affection for the ignorant man who had once supposed them to be uncivilized? But the people today have learnt to look into a person's heart; how is it possible that they should be angry with a man for his genuine ignorance? Even so, I took the very first opportunity in a public meeting to ask forgiveness for my mistaken description of them. People laughed heartily when I described my error. They had not expected me to apologize.

Who would call the people of Assam uncivilized? Anyone who does so must himself be an uncivilized person like myself. Who would regard as uncivilized a people whose women weave the most beautiful cloth and wear only what they themselves have woven?

As Gujarat is in the west of India and to the south of the Vindhyas, Assam is in the extreme east and north of the country. It is the north-east corner of India. From there one can, walking along the banks of the Brahmaputra, go to Tibet and following a foot-tract southwards through the mountains reach Burma. Wherever you turn your eyes in Assam, it is all green. One of the hills in Assam, Cherapunji, has the heaviest rainfall in India, an average of 368 inches a year. Actually in 1861 the rainfall amounted to 805 inches, and of this 366 inches of rain fell in the month of July alone! Nowhere is the rainfall less than 60 inches. And so with the rainfall on the one hand and the river Brahmaputra on the other, what can one expect but greenery all round in rich profusion? Moreover, it is all hills and hills on either side of the river, so that a scene of the highest beauty meets the eye in whichever direction it turns.

The house in which we are put up is just by the riverside. The river, in front, flows peacefully. I deliberately use the word "peacefully". As the water is deep, I see no turbulence in it. So big is the Brahmaputra that large ships can sail on it throughout the year. If only we could acquire such serenity and enjoy such peace, within what a short time we could win swaraj! We do not want the roar of shallow waters, but want rather the peace that is in the stillness of deep waters and the strength which it reveals.

A large variety of plants and many kinds of fruit grow here. Tea, of course, is there. But can anyone say that we have gained any benefit from it? We all know the harm it has done. Fruits such as bananas, pine-apples, oranges and custard apples grow in plenty here. Among cereals paddy is the chief crop.

The people are trustful and simple. Both the Hindus and the Muslims speak Assamese. Bengali and Assamese are said to be sister languages. The script is the Bengali one. As I tour the country I see that, if all the Indian languages were written in the Devanagari script this would greatly strengthen the idea of our being one nation. There should be only two scripts, the Urdu and the Devanagari. There can be no doubt that there would be little difficulty in understanding Assamese, Bengali, Punjabi, Sindhi and other languages if they were written in the Devanagari script. If this could be done, students of all these languages would be saved much time and would find the languages very easy to learn.

But this was by the way. The people of Assam can be said to be relatively happy. Their land does not require much cultivation. The flood waters of the rivers fertilize it, so that the people are able to earn their livelihood with little labour. Few "reforms" have been introduced in Assam as it came under British rule much later and consequently the people have saved their wealth and preserved their prosperity. They never work as labourers. Since, however, the tea gardens cannot be maintained without labourers, the required number are brought from the United Provinces. Hence it is that we hear many stories of atrocities on them and that an incident like the one at Chandpur could take place.

Fifty years ago, the conditions were such that Assam produced all the needs of its people. The reader will be pleased to know that even today every woman in Assam knows weaving. She weaves all the cloth she needs for herself. All women in families of consequence as in ordinary families are weavers. They do not weave for a living, but do so in their spare time in the home. A girl who cannot weave will never get a partner. The owner of the house where I am staying is a big zemindar and has money

enough and to spare, but his seventy-year-old mother, his sisters and his wife, all weave. His daughter of ten or eleven also weaves.

Assam produces a good quantity of silk, and so the women weave both silk and cotton yarn. They can also work exquisite designs on the cloth. Fifty years ago, every woman used to spin as well as weave. But with British rule came foreign yarn and this spelt ruin, total and complete. Attracted by that yarn, the women gave up spinning. Fortunately, because of the custom that one who does not weave cannot marry, they kept up their weaving. Spinning is easy enough for women who are used to such work, and so there has been an awakening among them and they have again started spinning. At the time when foreign yarn was introduced in Assam, a British critic had observed that these women had not gained anything from it since they had not taken up any other work in place of spinning.

Even today, forty thousand acres of land in Assam are under cotton cultivation. This cotton must be of a very high quality, because the slivers of cotton which were shown to me reminded me of what we see in Andhra. They were very clean, soft and free from dust particles. I have been given a sample of cloth, so fine that it can almost rival Andhra cloth.

The Assamese-speaking population of Assam numbers thirty-seven lakhs. Of this number, no less than ten lakhs are women. If they spin and weave for India, Assam could not only meet its own cloth requirements but could also provide India with a large quantity of khadi.

It seems that the Congress workers in Assam are efficient. My host belongs to the Senapati family of this province. He is a barrister of long standing. He is a big zemindar and was a member of the Legislative Assembly. He has much public work to his credit. Today he is a staunch non-co-operator. Shri Bardoloi is the Secretary. He too is a barrister of long standing and a man with property. He has adopted full non-co-operation. There are seventy-eight Assamese lawyers, of whom fifteen have given up practice and are engaged in non-co-operation work. About 500 volunteers are working under them. Many of them are students who have left their colleges.

The people of Assam are addicted to opium and throw away lakhs of rupees on it. These workers inform me that the opium-habit is greatly on the decline after the starting of the non-co-operation movement. It is said that the revenue from it has decreased by twenty-five per cent. There were also large numbers who smoked foreign cigarettes but you will hardly find any doing

so now. Those who still smoke use the country-made *bidi*. But even this is being left off. I am informed that, thanks to non-co-operation, people are introducing reforms on their own.

WOMEN'S MEETING

Three separate women's meetings were held, one for Marwari[1] sisters, one for Assamese and the third for Bengalis. Of these, the Assamese and the Bengali women came to the meetings clad in their simplest saris instead of in their very expensive foreign ones. Many felt ashamed because they did not have khadi saris. The Marwari sisters were dressed entirely in foreign clothes. But Shri Jamnalalji[2] informs me that even they have now asked for khadi saris. Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife[3] was present at this meeting, and she pleased the people by her khadi dress. She is a good speaker and, wearing a *burka*[4], even made a speech.

BONFIRE OF FOREIGN CLOTH

I am writing this note in Gauhati. It is the principal city of Assam. The journey from Calcutta takes nineteen hours. A huge public meeting was held here, and at this meeting there was a bonfire of a large heap of foreign cloth. I saw in the heap a great number of fine dhotis, fine saris and caps and a good quantity of lace. The sacred task of lighting the bonfire was, of course, left to me. The sight after the bonfire was lighted seemed grand to me. Hundreds of fine shirts and other garments of foreign cloth flew up in the air and fell back into the fire. There were very few caps among these as they are not much in use on this side. Here, too, khadi has come into use, so that those who wear caps use mostly caps made of khadi.

MARWARIS

Marwaris are found in large numbers in Assam. All external trade is in their hands. As I have already said, the people of Assam, because of the fact that their lands yield good crops, rarely go in for trade or seek jobs, and the result is that trade is controlled by Marwaris and Government posts are monopolized by Bengalis. Many of these Marwaris trade in foreign yarn and foreign cloth. The majority of them—about sixty-five business

[1] Inhabitant of Marwar in Rajasthan

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj (1889-1942); treasurer, Indian National Congress for many years; Gandhiji regarded him as his fifth son.

[3] Begum Sahiba; *vide* "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921 and "Notes", 29-9-1921 under the sub-title 'A Brave Woman'.

[4] A veil

men—pledged themselves not to import foreign yarn or cloth from now on.

Assam Muslims

There is a large population of Muslims in Assam but they take little part in public affairs. They do not even have a proper idea of the Khilafat. But now one finds that there has been an awakening amongst them, too. One may say that they have been awakened by the Hindu leaders. As a result, one finds no hostility between Hindus and Muslims here. The presence of Maulana Mahomed Ali and Maulana Azad Sobhani has led to a greater awakening and an infusion of courage among the Muslims.

Enjoying Oneself at Other People's Expense

I have said above that Gauhati is the principal city of Assam. But it is not its capital. Shillong is the capital. It can be reached by car from Gauhati in about five hours. It is 4,000 feet above sea-level. I have not been able to go there, but it is said that the place is a European centre. If one could live all the year round in Simla, it would have been the permanent capital and not one for the summer alone. If it were possible to live in Darjeeling throughout the year, it would have been the permanent capital of Bengal. Does not the Bombay Presidency have three capitals? For some time it is Bombay, for a while Ganeshkhind and in the summer it is Mahabaleshwar. But because the climate of Shillong is such that Europeans can live there throughout the year, it has been made the [permanent] capital of Assam. Can the cry of the labourers toiling in the fields reach up to such a height? Might is right in all matters. The planter can live in Shillong or run up there whenever he needs to. Dare any of his labourers go there? Even the poor man's appeal would get crumpled and torn by the time it reaches Shillong.

Brahmaputra and the Government—What a Contrast!

The Brahmaputra is such a large river that from a woman it is transformed into a man—it is a *nada*[1]—but there is no limit to its humility. Though he dwells on the top of the Himalayas, he descends to the plains to bring happiness and carries on his bosom thousands of men and their goods from one place to another. For this reason he is worshipped by the whole of Assam and even I,

[1] The masculine form of *nadi* meaning "river"

who come from the extreme west, involuntarily bow my head. Our Government, after disembarking at Apollo Bunder[1], uses the services of innumerable labourers and steam and electricity to climb up, and lodges itself in Simla or Shillong and snarls at people from there. What wonder if people in their fear cry out, "Save us, save us"! The Brahmaputra gives solace. The Government which has its headquarters in Shillong scorches the people from that height and, for this reason, the Assamese have left off saluting it, co-operating with it. What can the people do but run away if the Brahmaputra in his fury should inundate fields and drown villages? And what can they do but flee when scorched by the blazing fire of the Government? The Assamese have realized that the golden way for them is non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-9-1921

24. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON[2]

ON TOUR,
September 4, 1921

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I found your letter awaiting me on my return to Calcutta from the East Bengal tour.

I wish you and yours a happy life of service.

I was longing for your letter and to hear how you were doing.

I cannot understand your not getting *Young India*. I am inquiring.

When you return to India, you will find the Ashram devoting its best time to carding, spinning and weaving. I wish you would study Danish hand-spinning, hand-weaving, if there be any such in Denmark.

God is great. Not by the effort we are making, but by His grace it is possible to gain swaraj this year. And then you return without hindrance.[3] There will be just as much steadfastness needed to work out swaraj as is needed for attaining it. Let

[1] In Bombay

[2] This was written after hearing the news of the addressee's marriage with E. K. Menon in Denmark.

[3] The British Government, for a time, refused her permission to return to India.

Anne Marie[1] work here for its attainment and you will work there to make it a success.

With love to you both,

Yours,
BAPU

My Dear Child, pp. 73-4

25. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
Silence Day [September 5, 1921][2]

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI,

I have your letter. About visitors [to the Congress] I will write a note[3] in *Young India*.

I am in fact pining to return there, but work will not allow me to leave the place. Rajagopalachari[4] wires from Madras to say that I must not leave Calcutta before I get another telegram from him. In any case, the work before me is not likely to be finished *before the 12th*.

The swadeshi movement in Bengal has slackened. Quite a number of spinning-wheels are no doubt being plied, but the yarn is not properly accounted for; nor is weaving attended to as it ought to be.

Civil disobedience had better be postponed at least during this month. Let there be as much picketing as possible, in terms of the Delhi Resolution. It seems better that we start civil disobedience only when we are ready to carry it to the bitter end. If I can discuss the matter with co-workers, I shall be in a better position to judge. It is enough if, for the present, we concentrate on swadeshi, including both the boycott of foreign cloth and the production of khadi.

[1] Anne Marie Petersen, who, along with Esther, worked in South India; was an inmate of Sabarmati Ashram for some time.

[2] This letter was written by Gandhiji on a silence day during his stay at Calcutta. According to the itinerary given in "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 22-8-1921, Gandhiji was to reach Calcutta on September 4, 1921, and stay there till September 12.

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 22-9-1921, under the sub-title 'The Congress Not a Show'.

[4] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman, first Indian Governor-General

From your letter, I take it that there are at present no bickerings going on there in the Vidyapith.

Please take care of your health. There is plenty of work to be disposed of before December. The face of the country is bound to be transformed. Whether it will become a lion's or a jackal's is in the hands of God, or perhaps in our own.

The Viceroy's speech has disillusioned me still more. If the Prince is not coming for political reasons, why is he coming at all and at whose expense? But, for the present, we simply need not worry about this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALLABHBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine

26. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

CALCUTTA,
Silence Day [September 5, 1921][1]

CHI. MANI,

I received your letter just now. My appeal is for burning garments only. Some people have foreign carpets in their houses and foreign coverings on their couches, but most of them would not like to part with them. I have, therefore, not asked these to be discarded. It is enough if they do not make any fresh purchases of such articles. We should ask the people to part with their clothes only. I will write in *Navajivan* on the subject.

It is good you are visiting the [Jain] *apasras*[2] during *Pachusan*[3]. Do any women in the congregation hand over their foreign clothes?

I shall have to stay on in Calcutta till the 12th at any rate. I shall consider what to do after that.

It seems certain that malpractices have now entered the manufacture of Bezwada saris. The best thing is to leave those saris alone.

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2] A place of residence for Jain sadhus
[3] Religious festival of the Jains celebrating the birth of Mahavira

You did well in writing to Kumudbehn. She will feel comforted by your letters.

Mahadev will come here tomorrow to see me.

Here too there are two enthusiastic girls of your age, who wear khadi exclusively and help Deshbandhu Das's[1] sister in her Nari Mandir[2] work.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne

27. SPEECH AT PUNJAB SABHA MEETING, CALCUTTA

September 7, 1921

A meeting convened under the auspices of the Punjab Sabha was held on Wednesday afternoon at the Khalsa Dewan Association, 62, Sambhunath Pandit Street, Bhowanipur. Lala Meghraj Jai presided. There was a large gathering composed mostly of Sikhs. There was also a sprinkling of Marwaris. Several Sikh ladies were also present. . . .

Mr. Gandhi in the course of his address said at the outset that last time when he came to Calcutta he appealed to the people for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund and he was pleased to get a ready response for the good of the whole of India. Mr. Gandhi wanted the foreign clothes to be either burnt or sent to Smyrna. He urged the complete boycott of foreign goods and he advised the gathering to use hand-spun cloth—cloth that was produced on charkhas. He was prepared to give swaraj to the people of the whole of India and to undo the wrongs done to the Khilafat and to the Punjab if all of them tried their level best to clothe themselves with swadeshi clothes. That was the resolution passed by both the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. The All-India Congress Committee also passed a resolution that there should be a complete boycott of foreign goods before the 30th of September and that the people should be clothed in their own country-made clothes. Mr. Gandhi exhorted them to see that the above resolution was carried into effect if they really meant to do good to the country. Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said that he knew that the Sikhs were a very powerful community. If they were really sincere and earnest in their work and took to the charkha he had no doubt that they would be able not only to clothe their own community but

[1] C. R. Das (1870-1925); lawyer, orator and author; President, Gaya Congress, 1921; founder, Swarajya Party, 1923

[2] Women's institute

the people of the whole of India. He wanted them to follow the principle of non-violent non-co-operation in its entirety and should on no account adopt any measures that would lead to violence. He very much regretted the Nankana Saheb tragedy[1] and said that this event was more outrageous than that of the Punjab. It was natural that they (Sikhs) took this event in that light and he had heard and had seen reports of their meetings but Mr. Gandhi asked them to forget all those events. It was true that the sin committed by the cities had no atonement and that it was the general belief that the only atonement for those wrongs was that they should be severely punished. Mr. Gandhi did not like to punish them and in his opinion it was God alone who would punish them. In conclusion Mr. Gandhi advised the Sikhs to see that the great task in which they were engaged was accomplished peacefully.

Maulana Azad Sobhani and Lala Lajpat Rai[2] also spoke on the subject of non-co-operation and boycott. . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-9-1921

28. *SPEECH TO MARWARI MERCHANTS, CALCUTTA*

September 7, 1921

Mr. Gandhi had a conference with the piece-goods merchants in the night at 124, Canning Street, which lasted till midnight. Mr. Gandhi urged them not to sell foreign cloth and not to enter into a fresh contract. The merchants, however, stated that they had already agreed to act according to the resolution passed by the Marwari Chamber of Commerce which expressly stated that they were not going to purchase foreign cloth till 31st December, 1921. Mr. Gandhi wanted from them an undertaking that they would not purchase any more foreign cloth without any specified time limit. Mahatma Gandhi, however, gave them further time to consider the matter and promised to address them again before the 13th instant when he was expected to leave Calcutta.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 396-402.

[2] 1865-1928; social reformer, writer and political leader; deported in 1907; founder, Servants of the People Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1920

29. NOTES

The Ali Brothers

I hope that the rumour about the impending prosecution of the Brothers is untrue. If the Government really desire that the issue between them and the people should be decided on merits and by the ripening of public opinion, they will leave the Brothers alone. I shall certainly hope, that the people will remain calm, dignified and firm, in spite of their prosecution and incarceration. But their incarceration will make the task of preservation of peace more difficult than it already is. No two men have so successfully restrained the Mussulmans as these two patriots have. They have, in season and out of season, in private and in public, preached and practised non-violence. And even in respect of the speeches, some parts of which seemed to bear a contrary interpretation, I know that they never meant violence. The prosecution of the Brothers would, therefore, mean an intention to strangle the ever-growing Khilafat agitation in India, and would amount to a direct challenge to the Indian Mussulmans, and indeed, to the whole of India. For the Khilafat has become an Indian question. It is no longer merely a Mussulman grievance.

But I write this more to warn the people than the Government. If the people have understood the message of the brave Brothers, it is that they must stand the gravest provocation for the sake of their religion and country, that they must be prepared to suffer for either to the utmost, that the interests of Hindus and Mussulmans are identical and therefore they must sink or swim together, and that they must be true as steel and brave like lions and must tell the truth as they know it even on the gallows. The greatest honour the people can do to the Brothers, is to follow the non-co-operation programme to the letter and win swaraj during this year. Anger over their incarceration will be madness. We have dared openly to desire and to prepare for the end of the existing system of Government, and challenged its administrators to do their worst. We must neither be surprised nor angry, if they treat us seriously and take up the challenge. For they must, some day or other, take us at our word and put us to the invited test, or mend in accordance with our will. We shall be committing a grievous breach of the laws of the game, if we are found wanting when we are weighed in the scales of our own make. The only prescription for non-co-operators when anyone is arrested,

is to put forth redoubled zeal in the prosecution of our programme, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture in our own homes of the cloth we need. There must not be any hartal.

A THREATENED INFLICTION

I have just heard, that Mr. Painter, who has distinguished himself by his wanton provocation of the people of Dharwar,[1] is to be promoted and inflicted upon Gujarat as Commissioner. An official, who in the public estimation has disgraced himself, earns rewards from the Government for meritorious services. I hope, that Gujarat will mark in a suitable and special manner its disapproval of the insult sought to be offered by the Dharwar Collector being imposed upon it. Gujarat will have, if the rumoured appointment is actually made, a unique opportunity of showing how such insult can be dealt with in a non-co-operation spirit. We must distinguish between the man and the Commissioner. We must boycott the latter and render social service to the former. We must therefore permit him to receive all he may reasonably need as man for creature comforts, but if we have the people with us, the Commissioner, Mr. Painter, may not get a blade of grass for the upkeep or the dignity of his office. We must therefore inculcate among the people the habit of refusing salaam to him in virtue of office. They must not send any applications to him. They must not, whilst he is touring in the country, supply him with any convenience whatsoever. He must be made, in every dignified and peaceful manner, to feel that he is not wanted as an official in Gujarat. The municipalities containing non-co-operators should refuse to recognize him as Commissioner in every way possible. If we have developed the spirit of real independence and manliness, we would refuse to put up with an official who has forfeited public opinion as Mr. Painter has. What, for instance, would be said of us, if Col. Frank Johnson or Gen. Dyer[2] were imposed upon us? We have to pass through certain rigid tests as proof of our capacity for self-government. One of them is refusal to submit to national insults. Indeed, if we had evolved that capacity sufficiently, I would expect even the employees, who would come under Mr. Painter's direct control, to resign by way of protest. We have such mortal fear of loss of livelihood, that the employees are the last to be expected to develop that sense of self-respect, which is so necessary for national existence. But their

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 1-9-1921, under the sub-title 'How to Kill Swadeshi'.

[2] Officer Commanding, Amritsar, who ordered firing on a peaceful assembly of people at Jallianwala Bagh

reluctance will not materially interfere with attainment of swaraj this year, if the general public is responsive enough. It is time for them to assert themselves individually as well as collectively. We must begin our battle with a disciplined and complete hartal, when that gentleman enters Ahmedabad if he does. And to that end, seeing that there is ample time, the Provincial Congress Committee should secure permission from the Working Committee for declaring a hartal all over Gujarat in the event of Mr. Painter being sent to Gujarat in any official capacity. If a hartal becomes necessary, I need hardly say that it must be completely voluntary. The labourers should participate after due notice and permission.

Hypocrisy Unmasked

Hitherto official letters have been noted for their reserve and unornamental style. If offence has been intended, it has been covered under severely restrained language. But officials have now begun to throw off the mask, and like ordinary mortals they have taken to expressing their pleasure or anger in so many words, instead of allowing their acts only to speak for themselves. I have noticed this in the official correspondence in Assam. But the most refreshing illustration comes from Gujarat. The editor of the *Prajabandhu* wrote to the Deputy Commissioner of Salt and Excise, drawing his attention to grave irregularities committed by his subordinates in dealing with picketing. The editor's letter contains nothing offensive. He adopted simple dignified language. He did not argue. He only put a question. But the Deputy Commissioner was prejudiced against picketing, and he thus gave vent to his pent-up feelings:

> Since you send me an extract from your paper, and press for a reply, I give you one. Your so-called picketing campaign, undertaken with the avowed object of injuring the lawful Government, cannot be called a genuine social measure undertaken for the good of the people. It is like the washing of an elephant. Owing to the violence of the persons engaged in your campaign, I understand, that the Excise staff in Ahmedabad are far too busy in preserving order and avoiding a breach of the peace, while carrying on their ordinary duties, to be able to spare time in investigating your complaint of some technical infringement of the licence conditions. I presume, that you are only making the complaint (believed to be an unfounded one) with the object of further harassing the Government officers, and I shall certainly not lend my authority for any such purpose. If, however, you have any other motives, you can renew the complaint after restraining the objectionable conduct of your adherents.

The only remark I need make is, that the editor is not conducting the campaign of picketing, he claims no adherents. He simply discharged a public duty by drawing attention to serious, not technical, breaches of liquor-licensing law on the part of or at the instance of liquor dealers.

Young India, 8-9-1921

30. THE MEANING OF THE KHILAFAT

I continue to receive letters from far and near, warning me against my interest in the Khilafat. Here is a typical letter from an old friend from New Zealand:—

> Just a few lines to say. I do not forget you. Were I in danger of so doing, the cables that often appear in our papers would prevent me forgetting. I see, you have a mighty problem you are trying to solve in regard to India. Whether you are facing it in the wisest way I cannot say, for I am not in a position to judge. I would esteem it a favour, if you would hand enclosed post office order for 10/- to the publisher of your paper, *Young India* I think it is called, if it is published in English, or to the publisher of any paper in English representing your side of the case. Perhaps as an old friend, I may be borne with if I speak freely, even although I should be speaking without full knowledge. It always grieved me, that you should be an arch-supporter of the Turkish Empire, and that the Khilafat question should be turned to political ends to undermine and cripple and confuse the administration of the British Government in India. Turkey's crimes against Bulgarians, Greeks and Armenians call to heaven for judgment. I wonder, how far the Muslims in their All-India Khilafat Congress during recent years protested against those atrocities and dissociated themselves from the Turkish policy of extermination of a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race (the Armenians). The blood of these martyrs will cry to heaven for justice, and not one can be forgotten by Him who marks the sparrow's fall. If Turkey's history has been one of rapine and massacre, is it not therefore to be shorn of its power as no longer worthy to be trusted with it? If political power is not to be used to maintain justice, freedom and fraternity of tributary races, but is to be used for oppression, persecution, extermination, robbery and rapine, is such a nation not to be judged by other powers and deprived of her power to continue a malevolent sway? To be shorn of political power need not deprive Islam of its spiritual weapons, if it has such. By its spiritual force let it live, or die if it has not such. Political power is a curse to any religion, and history shows, it has often been used tyrannically, e.g., the Roman Catholic Church.

I do not know what are exactly the aims of the non-co-operators, but it would appear they have come to object, *in toto,* to any British officials in the country. Rome was not built in a day, and a constitution cannot be framed ahead of the conditions of a country. Suppose all British officials were to leave bag and baggage tomorrow and Natives put in their place, would the administration be as pure as it is, would justice be done everywhere through the courts of your great country? I understand, that the Indians fear the Native police, and their officials (Natives) are peculiarly open to bribery and corruption. Before a people can be self-governing there must be a basis of national character on which to build and with which to build, and has the day come, when there are forces running through your various spheres of social, educational and political life that are regenerative and purifying?

Political propaganda, if revolutionary, may easily attract the basest and most malevolent among men, and if they capture the control of machinery of organization, the blind and more than blind will lead those who follow their dictum to the pit. I am sure, that you personally have not departed from your noble ideals and unselfish spirit of patriotism and justice, and freedom of soul, but there may be great slumbering forces awakened in the state of society around you, that may carry you far beyond the points of wisdom and measures that make for true national well-being. Your country has all the elements that might make India a Russia, a Sinn Fein Ireland, a land of civil war, inter-tribal bloodshed. Division may easily spread through a land like India, your independent princes become arrayed on opposing sides, and no strong controlling unifying power be forthcoming to preserve peace, conserve progress, lead the way to *fuller* national life. Your pathway must be surrounded by snares and pitfalls which you can only escape by a clear vision of the will of God and unfaltering adherence thereto. As long as you coincide with the wishes of the popular clamour, there will be many who will cry "Hosanna" and will strew your path with palm leaves, but if you adhere to the high principles of the vision of God, the same people will cry, "Crucify him, away with him." You know the parallel. He unfalteringly followed the will of God and they rejected Him. His aims were too pure, His kingdom too spiritual, His methods too divine. He died, but God raised Him up and made that resurrection the life of the world's thought, made Him meet the need of all the men as Saviour, High Priest to represent, King to rule over.

Courage, brother; do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God and do the right.

Let the road be rough and dreary
And its end far out of sight,
Foot it bravely, strong or weary,
Trust in God and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light!
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no party, sect or faction,
Trust no leaders in the fight;
But in every word and action
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no lovely forms of passion,—
Fiends may look like angels bright;
Trust no custom, school or fashion;
Trust in God and do the right.

Some will hate thee, some will love thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight;
Cease from man and look above thee;
Trust in God and do the right.

Simple rule, and safest guiding,
Inward peace, and inward might,
Star upon our path abiding,—
Trust in God, and do the right.

Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God, and do the right.

The great thing is to have divine wisdom, the deep insight into principles and far-seeing wisdom of true statesmanship. You are doubtless familiar with the life of Abraham Lincoln, his clear-sighted vision, his absolute integrity, tender-heartedness, humility, humour, humaneness.

I often say to my friends, "If you heard Mr. Gandhi's side and the great grievances that exist under the present order of things, you would understand his opposition."

The question is, what is the best way for the welfare of India to correct existing abuses. Strikes, violence arouse passions, and a hundred discontents and ill-feeling, and in most cases defeat their own ends. Reforms must come along constitutional lines, if the gain is to be accompanied by good feeling and unity and peace. Gains by revolutionary means cannot be a natural evolution. From my distant corner I can only earnestly

pray, that God may guide and direct and bless you, and make you an instrument for the true well-being of India.

The warmth and the sincerity are unmistakable. I know the friend to be a devout godfearing Christian. But it must be evident to anyone who knows anything about the Turkish question, that my correspondent is strongly prejudiced against the Turks. His picture of the Armenians as "a noble, excellent, industrious and gentle race" betrays the extent of his ignorance about the question. He cannot be blamed for it. The Turkish side has been sedulously kept from the English-reading public. All these good Christians scattered about in different parts of the world have only one class of reading presented to them. The missionary journals are fanatically, I was going to say, criminally anti-Turkish and anti-Islam. The very word charity about which St. Paul wrote so magnificently is absent from the minds of the writers in the missionary journals, when they write about Islam and Turkey. The Turk is to them the arch-infidel created by God only to be cursed. It is this prejudiced but honest attitude that stands in the way of Truth and Justice.

I have no desire to defend Turkey against the Armenians or the Greeks. I am not prepared to deny Turkish misrule or misdeeds. But the Greeks and the Armenians have an infinitely worse record. What is more, the defence of the Khilafat is the defence of a pure ideal. It is not necessary to defend the conduct of individual Popes in order to support the institution of Papacy. Oppose all Turkish misrule by all means, but it is wicked to seek to efface the Turk and with him Islam from Europe under the false plea of Turkish misrule.

What is still worse is, that the defeat of the Central Powers should be utilized to crush Islam. Was the late war a crusade against Islam, in which the Mussulmans of India were invited to join? To say that the Mussulmans may have anyone they choose as their spiritual head, but that they may not interfere with the disintegration of Turkey, is not to know the Khilafat. The Khilafat must ever be the Defender of the Faith of the Prophet, and therefore nobody can become or remain Khalifa, immediately he is deprived of or loses the power of defending Islam against the whole world. One may dispute the ethics of the doctrine in the abstract, but England is not engaged in a war against Islam because it is unethical. In that case England has to renounce her association with millions whose faith is divorced from ethics.

As a matter of fact, is there anything immoral in a religion

seeking to sustain itself by possession of temporal power? In practice has not Christianity been sustained by temporal power? And even in Hinduism, have not Rajput Kings been custodians of Hinduism?

What I venture to commend to the many Christians who honestly think like my friend, is to join the defence of the Khilafat as an ideal, and thus recognize that the struggle of non-co-operation is one of religion against irreligion.

For my part I have the clearest possible conscience in this matter. The end to me is just. I fight to bolster up no fraud or injustice. The means are equally just. In the prosecution of the fight, truth and non-violence are the only weapons. Self-suffering is the truest test of sincerity.

Young India, 8-9-1921

31. THE TWO INCOMPATIBLES

Violence and non-violence are two incompatible forces destructive of each other. Non-violence for its success therefore needs an entirely non-violent atmosphere. The Moplah outbreak has disturbed the atmosphere, as nothing else has since the inauguration of non-co-operation. I am writing this at Sylhet on the 29th August. By the time it is in print, much more information will have reached the public. I have only a hazy notion of what has happened. I have seen only three issues of daily papers containing the Associated Press messages. One cannot help noting the careful editing these messages have undergone. But it is clear that Moplahs have succeeded in taking half a dozen lives and have given already a few hundred. Malabar is under martial law. The reprisals on the part of the Government are still to follow. The braver the insurgents, the sterner the punishment. Such is the law of governments. And I would not have minded the loss of ten times as many lives as the Moplahs must have lost, if only they had remained strictly non-violent. They would then have brought swaraj nearest. It is any day worth all the price we can pay in our own lives. For the Moplahs it would have meant too the immediate redress of the Khilafat wrong. God wants the purest sacrifice. Our blood must not contain the germs of anger or hate. It is not a sacrifice freely given that exacts a price. The Moplahs have demanded a price. The sacrifice has lost much of its nobility. Now it will be said, that the Moplahs have received well-merited punishment.

There would have been no martial law, if only the Moplahs had died. And if there had been, it would have been thrice welcome. It would have ended the system of Government which is decimating the land.

Of course nowadays it is the fashion to make non-co-operation responsible for every affliction, whether it is a famine, a coolie exodus or a Moplah rising. It is the finest tribute that can be paid to the universality of non-co-operation. But nothing has been produced by the Madras Government in support of the charge.

Our own duty is clear. Non-co-operators must wash their hands clean of all complicity. We must not betray any mental or secret approval of the Moplahs. We must see clearly, that it would be dishonourable for us to show any approval of the violence. We must search for no extenuating circumstance. We have chosen a rigid standard for ourselves and by that we must abide. We have undertaken to do no violence even under the most provoking circumstances. Indeed we anticipate the gravest provocation as our final test. The misguided Moplahs have therefore rendered a distinct disservice to the sacred cause of Islam and swaraj.

We may plead, as indeed we must, if we have acted honestly, that in spite of our efforts we have not been able to bring under check and discipline all the turbulent sections of the community. The choice for the people lies between the gentle and self-imposed rule of non-violence and non-co-operation, and the iron rule of the Government. The latter is now demonstrating its power and ability to counteract all the forces of violence by its superior and trained violence. We have no answer, if we cannot show that we have greater influence over the people. We must be able quite clearly to see for ourselves and show to the people, that display of force by us against that of the Government is like a child attempting with a straw to stop the current.

I am painfully aware of the fact, that we have not as a people yet arrived at the settled conviction, that India cannot attain immediate swaraj except through complete non-violence. We do not even see, that Hindu-Muslim unity must vanish under the strain of violence. What is at the back of our mutual distrust, if it is not the fear of each other's violence? And swaraj without real heart-unity is an inconceivable proposition.

What is it that hinders attainment of swaraj, if it is not fear of violence? Are we not deterred simply through that fear, from taking all our steps at once? Can we not, if we can be sure of non-violence, issue today an ultimatum to the Government either to

co-operate with us or to go? Do not the Moderates keep aloof, mainly because they distrust our ability to create a non-violent atmosphere? Their timidity will derive nurture from the Moplah outbreak.

What then must we do? Certainly not feel despondent. We must go forward with greater zeal, greater hope because [of] greater faith in our means. We must persevere in the process of conversion of the most ignorant of our countrymen to the doctrine of non-violence as an indispensable means as well for redressing the Khilafat wrong as for attaining swaraj.

The Moplahs are among the bravest in the land. They are God fearing. Their bravery must be transformed into purest gold. I feel sure, that once they realize the necessity of non-violence for the defence of the faith for which they have hitherto taken life, they will follow it without flinching. Here is the testimony given to Moplah valour by the writer in the *Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

> The one constant element is a desperate fanaticism; surrender is unknown; the martyrs are consecrated before they go out and hymned after death!

Such courage is worthy of a better treatment. The Government dealt with it by passing years ago a special Act against them. It has already set its machinery in motion for the present trouble. The Moplahs will no doubt die cheerfully. I wonder, if it is possible for us to transmute their courage into the nobler courage of non-violence. It may be impossible to achieve the miracle through human effort. But God is noted for His miracles. Many consider, that attainment of swaraj this year, if it is realized, must be counted a miracle. It has got to be preceded by a miraculous conversion of India, not excluding its bravest sons, to the doctrine of non-violence at least in its restricted scope, i.e., as an indispensable condition for securing India's freedom.

Young India, 8-9-1921

32. *THE WAY TO SAVE THE COW*

The visit of Maulanas Mahomed Ali and Azad Sobhani and myself to Bihar was undertaken in order to check the growth of misunderstanding on the cow question. We delivered many speeches at many places. The substance of one speech of mine I am able to give to the reader by the courtesy of a friend who took down the notes.

At the commencement of his speech Mr. Gandhi referred to the touching of the feet which had become embarrassing, and said :

People do these things in a spirit of hero-worship, and in Bihar particularly there is an abundance of that spirit. People even talk of an avatar. As a Hindu, I believe of course, in avatars. I believe, that in the pursuit of his plan, God sends His special messengers on earth, upon whom the effulgence or the glory of God specially shines, and who in our Shastras are known as avatars. But that is not the case here. In my view, the condition of India is such, that there can be no coming of an avatar at this time. We must first purify ourselves and the country by hard, strenuous work on right lines, before we can even think of an avatar. And in India, what we want now is not hero-worship, but service. We want more and more servants for the country. The swaraj that we want does not mean, that on the destruction of the present raj, somebody else's will be established, whether he be a Gandhi, or to take the names of my brothers, a Maulana Shaukat Ali, or a Maulana Mahomed Ali. We know, that whatever may have been the case in past days, India is so wide awake now that there can no longer be any repetition of these things. We do not want that there will be one man to rule and everyone else to be his slave. We have had enough of slavery. What we want is to inspire the people with our own faith, and a living desire to serve the country. We want that every Indian be transformed into a Gandhi, a Maulana Shaukat Ali and a Maulana Mahomed Ali; and then the swaraj of our dream will be realized in its entirety. My submission to you, therefore, is, that you do not put obstruction in the way of the easy prosecution of our work by the touching of feet or unnecessary shoutings and *jayajayakars*[1]. It is unthinkable, that a whole crowd of people can touch me. But when those who are

[1] Shouts of victory

near me begin to fall at my feet, the crowd is tempted to follow suit, and indescribable confusion follows. So those who are near me should never touch my feet. They should not even bow low before me. Not only do I not like these things, but there is a possibility of my getting seriously hurt. I desire the country to move with a speed greater than the speed of the Punjab Express. We have got to attain swaraj within this year, so that we may celebrate its attainment in December next. I implore you once again not to do anything that may hinder the smooth progress of our work, for it means nothing but so much loss to the country.

I now come to the question which has really brought us to your place. As soon as I set foot here, I inquired whether there was peace between the Hindus and Mussulmans of this place. It was no small gratification to me to hear, that there was no misunderstanding between the two communities at Sasaram. But I am told that there is no earnestness about Congress work here. The Congresss Committee and the Khilafat Committee that are in existence do very little work. My request to these two Committees is that they put more energy into their work. I wanted to inquire about many other things, but I was so tired that I could not do so. On the question of cow-killing, I say that with the Hindus it is their dharma to protect the cow. The Hindus have many differences amongst them as regards religious belief, and religious and social customs and practices; but on the matter of the protection of the cow all Hindus are united. And I go so far as to say, that the cow question is the central and common fact in Hinduism, which differentiates it from all other religions of the world. In India the need for the cow is very great. Not only do the people drink her milk, but her male offspring is used for cultivating the land. The Hindus reverence the cow as they reverence the Brahmin. But the case is not so outside India. So there is no prohibition in the religion of our Mussulman brothers against the slaughter of cows. And if a Mussulman brother slays a cow, for instance during *Id*, on what ground can a Hindu raise his hand to strike him? Is he enjoined by the Shastras to kill a fellow-man in order to save a cow? There is really no such injunction in the Shastras; but on the contrary it is against the Shastras to do so. No Hindu raises his hand against an English brother, because he eats beef; nor does he prevent thousands and thousands of cows being led to the slaughter-house for the use of Englishmen in India. What I mean to say is this; in order to save the cow you can only sacrifice your own life; you cannot take another's life, nor can you even cherish anger against him. My brother Maulana Mahomed Ali in one of

his speeches today said one thing on this matter, which I realize as very true. He says, that three fourths of the responsibility for cow-slaughter in India lie with the Hindus; and the Mussulmans are guilty of only one-fourth. For the cows that are slain really come from Hindu custody. I have actually seen in Bombay shiploads of cows being sent out from India for slaughter in other lands. It is the Hindus that do cow-selling business, and not the Mussulmans. And my brother's suggestion that if an artificial price of say a hundred rupees for each cow could be set, cow-slaughter will automatically diminish, seemed to me to be very practical. It all depends upon us. In Bombay one cow given for the Tilak Swaraj Fund was sold for five hundred rupees, and another for a higher sum. If the *shraddha*[1] of both the buyer and the seller is sufficiently roused, all this is quite easy and practicable. My submission to the Hindus, therefore, is, that if you are really anxious to save the cow, do not quarrel with our Mussulman brothers, but live with them in peace. Do not try to force their hands. Give yourselves up wholly to their service in this hour of their sore need without asking for a return. I look upon the Khilafat problem for the Mussulmans in the same light as the cow problem for the Hindus. It is my firm belief, that the solution of one will automatically lead to the solution of the other. I do not say this in a spirit of bargain. If our offering of service to our Mussulman brethren be genuine and spontaneous, if we really sacrifice our lives for the safety of their religion, I have no doubt, that another law higher than the law of contract will operate, and solve the cow problem in India.

I wish to touch on another matter, before I close. I have come to know, that there are about five hundred families of Mussulman weavers in this place. But as they are looked down upon by fellow-Mussulmans, there is a tendency amongst them to give up their calling. It is absolutely necessary, that we check this tendency. Amongst us, Hindus, social distinctions based on karma do exist. But so far as I know, Islam does not recognize such differences. Mussulman society is based upon the theory of perfect equality. So it does not at all appear to me reasonable that these *julahas*[2] should be discredited in society. There is nothing dishonourable in the profession of weaving. In my opinion, the two most essential things in India, the things on which the existence of India depends, are agriculture and weaving. They are

[1] Spirit of reverence

[3] Weavers

like the two lungs of a living being. If one goes wrong, if it is diseased or rotten, the other lung may do duty for a time no doubt, but cannot keep up life for long. So it has been with India. She has been weakening in proportion to the decay of her weaving industry. And the programme of swadeshi, which we have started, is like the cure of a diseased lung, so that waste may be repaired, and new blood may flow into it making it healthy and strong. The moment we come to realize this absolute importance of agriculture and weaving for India, we shall lose all sense of contempt for the agriculturist or the weaver. We shall, then, see that they are objects of the highest regard. We must recognize, that without the help of our weavers, there can be no success of swadeshi in India. By swadeshi I mean that every province must produce its own cloth. If you depend upon Bombay for your cloth, that will be no swadeshi for Bihar. My appeal to the Congress Committee therefore, is, that it should lose no time in distributing charkhas to every home in Bihar. When that is done, every home becomes a spinning factory at our disposal. And with the production of yarn on this scale we can easily hope to see every lane transformed into a weaving factory. The question is very urgent for the whole of India, but more especially for Bihar. For of all the provinces of India Bihar is the poorest. I have included Orissa under Bihar here. But if we take them separately, Orissa comes to occupy the lowest place, and Bihar comes just above it. I gathered my idea about the extent of poverty in Bihar, when I was engaged in my work at Champaran. I came to know then, that the women in Bihar had in most cases to be satisfied with a single piece of cloth; indeed, they had no cloth other than the one which they wore. They told my wife,—they felt ashamed to tell me so directly,—that if I went to their houses, I would find nothing but old, worn out and tattered rags. They also said, "Gandhi asks us to bathe every day, but if we are to remain naked after washing the piece of cloth that covers our nakedness, we can't do so even for the sake of Gandhi." Such is the extent of poverty in Bihar. And if these women are given charkhas to work and paid two annas each for their daily labour, I have no doubt that they will take up the work in right earnest and pursue it with energy. I have known the indigo planters get work from them at the rate of six pice per head per day, and in that place if they find that the charkha yields them two annas daily, the thing will catch on automatically without any effort at preaching. These are the lines on which we have to start work immediately. I expect much from Bihar. I have

some special claim upon her. I hope Bihar will not deny me that claim. I expect you all to explain the thing I have said to men of the villages. The villagers are not likely to understand these things, but you who live in towns have wider experience of the world. So it is your duty to make these things intelligible to the villagers. Three things are vital to this movement for swaraj, without the fulfilment of which we can never hope to make any headway in our struggle. First, there must be absolute Hindu-Muslim unity. There must be a feeling of brotherliness amongst the Hindus and Mussulmans. This is the first condition of the success of this swaraj movement. Secondly, this peaceful and non-violent movement must always be kept peaceful and non-violent. It is easy for a man who bestows even the least thought on the subject to realize that we shall never succeed by violence. If we draw the sword, that will be simply to our own undoing, if only because we do not possess the modern implements of warfare such as aeroplanes, etc. So you must under no circumstance disturb the peace. We must observe peace with English and among ourselves, co-operators and non-co-operators, zamindars and ryots, in thought, word and deed. And thirdly we must immediately boycott all foreign cloth and manufacture for our needs in our own homes and villages. Then we attain the power to achieve the three ends.

Young India, 8-9-1921

33. *SPEECH AT HARISH PARK, CALCUTTA*

September 8, 1921

. . . Mr. Gandhi said that some months ago when he came to Calcutta for the purpose of collecting money for the Tilak Swaraj Fund he said that the required sum should be realized before 30th of June last and he was pleased to hear that that mission was successful. This time the Mahatma wanted a complete boycott of foreign goods before the 30th of September. Swadeshi was in full swing in all other provinces and the Mahatma wanted to have an assurance from the brothers and sisters of Bengal whether they would be able to help him in his new mission. The Mahatma expressed his regret at the weak response of Bengal as it lagged behind all other provinces in this respect. He knew that Bengalis were intellectually strong and ahead of other provinces but he failed to understand why she was backward in this noble cause. It was Bengalis who first initiated the swadeshi cult in Bengal and it was in Bengal that fine hand-spun clothes could be produced in former times

and he was surprised to hear their inability to carry on the work at the present time. He was confident that when the Bengalis would be able to realize that the use of swadeshi cloth would enable them to attain swaraj they would be able to accomplish this great task within the remaining twenty-four days of the current month. He regretted that the pleaders should have still continued their practices but the moment Mr. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru[1] suspended their legal practice his mission had been fulfilled. The Pujas were fast approaching and it was the great festival of the Hindus when they were required to purchase a number of clothes. Mr. Gandhi appealed to the people with folded hands not to purchase even a pice worth of foreign goods, particularly clothes. He hoped that if they readily responded to his appeal they would get the blessings of the Providence.

Continuing Mr. Gandhi said that there was a good deal of difference between the swadeshi movement in the days of the partition of Bengal and the present movement. At the time of the partition of Bengal restrictions if any, were confined to the boycott of foreign clothes. By foreign clothes it was meant clothes manufactured in London, but allowance was given for the use of goods manufactured in Japan. The present swadeshi cult meant total boycott of foreign clothes of all descriptions and it was restricted to only hand-spun clothes. At that time the movement was set on foot to get redress of certain grievances but the present had a higher and nobler object in view, namely, the attainment of swaraj. He advised the gathering to totally boycott foreign goods, burn them . . . . Some people had asked the speaker to send these clothes to Khulna for famine-stricken people there. Mr. Gandhi said he was opposed to their views as he did not like that these poor people should be polluted with the poison. If they wanted to help these people they . . . as well send their own swadeshi cloth and they themselves should wear *lungiyas*[2] . . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 9-9-1921

34. TELEGRAM TO CONGRESS AND KHILAFAT COMMITTEES, FARIDPUR

[Before *September 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE BADSHAH MIAN ABU KHALID RASHIDUD MIAN[3] ON HIS ARREST. THOUSANDS OF HIS DISCIPLES AND FRIENDS ARE LIKELY TO GET EXCITED. I WOULD URGE THEM TO SHOW THEIR REGARD BY IMMEDIATE ADOPTION OF SWADESHI, THAT IS,

[1] 1863-1931; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[2] Waist-cloth

[3] A religious divine of Bengal

BOYCOTT OF ALL FOREIGN CLOTH AND MANUFACTURE OF KHADI BY MEANS OF HAND-SPINNING AND HAND-WEAVING. I TRUST THAT THE PEOPLE WILL KEEP QUITE CALM AND DIGNIFIED. MAULANA AZAD SOBHANI WITH CERTAIN FRIENDS IS PROCEEDING TO FARIDPUR TO PACIFY THE PEOPLE.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 10-9-1921

35. BENEVOLENT PARSIS

[September 10, 1921][1]

Whenever I think of Parsi philanthropy, I realize that if the tiny Parsi community has become renowned in the world, it is because of its philanthropy. Among the well-known communities the Parsis are the smallest. Why does the world care for a community of eighty thousand men and women? The Parsis possess no armed strength, they employ no craftiness nor do they practise any magic; or, one may say, their philanthropy is their magic.

If the Parsis had earned millions and then locked them up in safes, they would have perished long ago. Philanthropy is a soul-force and in virtue of this soul-force which they possess the Parsis enjoy everyone's respect and are able to maintain their position.

Parsi philanthropy, however, takes the form of giving money. Money comes in and goes out. What will be their fate if they can earn money no more? Monetary philanthropy is only a very small part of soul-force. When talking to Parsi friends, I have often said that the Parsis are now being put to a test. If they wish to retain their glory only by counting their millionaires, they will not succeed. I have told Parsi friends that there was every danger of their spiritual growth being arrested because of excessive wealth. Every literate Parsi knows by now that I am simply in love with his community. I have also given the reasons for my love. This love of mine has been hurting me ever since I observed certain signs of moral weakening among the Parsis.

No community can survive merely by imitating others or if it remains rolling in luxury. I saw that Parsi life had become easy-going. Hospitals for Parsis, exclusive accommodation and other

[1] The article first appeared in the *Pateti* (Parsi New Year's Day) number of *Sanj Vartaman*. In 1921, *Pateti* fell on this date.

facilities for Parsis, separate funds for Parsis! I was alarmed. I saw that their philanthropy had assumed a form which held the danger of the community's losing its present position. Any community whose members live on what others' charity provides is bound to perish. A man can digest and assimilate only such amenities and comforts as he has earned by his efforts. Real manhood consists in availing oneself as little as possible of amenities provided by one's community. A man must let himself be tested on the anvil of difficulties.

Men are not born for imitating one another. Even a child has an individuality—his distinctive character. Eating, drinking and other such actions are performed by animals too. We are distinguished from animals because of one thing alone, that we have reason, we have discretion and the faculty of moral choice. What we do after reflection, the animal does instinctively. We may observe the behaviour of an ant and imitate its perseverance, but our imitation will have some originality if it is intelligent. Such imitation is not really imitation; if, however, a slave tries to imitate his master, he is bound to come toppling down.

When, therefore, young Parsi men and women started taking part in non-co-operation, I was delighted. One of the intentions behind non-co-operation may be to defeat the Government, that is injustice, but I wish to impress upon the hearts of Parsi men and women the chief motive underlying it. Non-co-operation means self-purification. It is a principle of medical science that disease-carrying germs cannot infect a person whose blood is quite pure. Healthy blood itself destroys such germs. Likewise, if we ourselves become pure and just, how can anyone oppress us? It is a wrong policy to fight the oppressor. The right course is to suffer, to bear his ill-treatment without submitting to his injustice. Once we have stood such an ordeal, nobody can use violence against us.

There is, in fact, no limit to self-purification. But the limits we have prescribed for ourselves are so narrow that even a child can reach them.

1. Why should we neglect our own and run after what is others'? That we should trade with foreigners when millions in India are dying of hunger is a crime against ourselves. To stop this crime, we should exclusively use indigenous cloth and give up foreign cloth however attractive it may be and, to be able to do this, we should all start carding, spinning and weaving. In this way we shall become self-supporting.

2. For following this rule of pure swadeshi, it is essential for us to adopt simplicity. We may also have to change our aim in dressing. We should dress not for decoration but for covering the body. We may, therefore, wear only such and so many clothes as are necessary in view of our climatic conditions. White is the coolest colour suitable to the Indian climate. It is pleasant to the eye. Any stain on a white garment is immediately visible and we are obliged to clean it. Burdening the body with a coat over and above a *sadra*[1] and a shirt or a blouse is positive cruelty to the body. If anything is required over a *sadra*, it may be shirt. Anything else is unnecessary. English-style trousers simply cannot match khadi pyjamas. We do not need chairs in our country. They may be necessary in countries with a cold and moist climate. We have no justification at all for wearing stiff and tight trousers. Loose and smooth pyjamas suit us best, as they enable us to sit on the floor. In this country, no other garment is as dirty as socks. If you wear them for a couple of hours in the summer, they stink. If the feet are left exposed, they remain clean and there is not the least beauty in covering them. No consideration of modesty is involved in the matter of covering any parts of the body except the ones whose sight may excite impure desires in us. Putting on boots is a cruelty in this country. Our feet can be sufficiently protected against mud or thorns by *chappals*[2] or slippers. In our country, shoes are known as shields against thorns or a protection for feet.

3. I do not know how the Parsis came to acquire the habit of drinking. I shall never be convinced that the Prophet Zoroaster has sanctioned drinking. In any case what is inconsistent with reason cannot be Shastra though it may be regarded as such. Nothing which teaches immorality can be Shastra. Liquor may be a necessity on the North Pole, but in temperate zones, where the climate is equable, drinking is certainly a heinous sin. While in England, I once attended a Parsi gathering. Everything was going on with perfect decorum. There was music and singing. Then followed a round of drinks. All propriety vanished. I felt ashamed to remain there and ran away. I observed such behaviour at Hindu and Muslim gatherings, too, in England. Is anyone who has sailed in a ship unacquainted with the unrestrained behaviour of passengers who get drunk? I have come across

[1] A loose garment of fine cloth worn under the shirt

[2] A kind of sandals

quite a few "moderate drinkers". It is true that they do not rc in gutters, but—?

Parsi men and women should, therefore, take a pledge to gi\ up drinking entirely.

4. I myself never eat meat. I did so once when I did n(know better; I have repented my action ever since and aton for it very severely. Both of us, my wife and I refused to ea meat when we were at death's door and the doctor prescribe meat-diet. I do not wish to survive even for a moment by eatin meat. I have learnt from my discussions with Muslim frienc that austere fakirs among them abstain from meat with a view t mastering anger and the cravings of the senses. However, I ar not asking Parsi men and women to become vegetarians. Throug my close contact with them, I know that their diet includes to much of meat and chicken. I should certainly urge them to avoi an excess of these so that they may have control over the palat(It is my considered opinion that the crores of Muslims who d not eat meat regularly have lost nothing in consequence; on th contrary, they have gained something.

I humorously refer to Parsis as *pa rishi*[1]. I expect much by wa of enlightenment and soul-force from this community of eight thousand. Being small, it can introduce useful reforms in a shoı time. I should like the Parsis to introduce such reforms and s be perfect modern sages of India. Prophet Zoroaster's was a highl moral life. I should like to see the utmost development of suc virtues among the Parsis. The *yajna* of the swaraj movemen requires the services of virtuous, fearless, simple, brave, honest an resolute men and women.

We are now in a position to understand the new meaning o philanthropy. It does not mean donating money only; it mean dedication of one's all, body, mind and possessions. Felicitating th Parsis on their New Year Day, I beg the Parsi brothers and sister that they dedicate to India all these powers. This will enhanc the worthiness of Parsi philanthropy, worthy as it is. I pray t(God that it may be so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-9-1921

[1] One-fourth of a sage

36. SPEECH TO KHILAFAT VOLUNTEERS, CALCUTTA

September 10, 1921

On Saturday afternoon about 500 volunteers belonging to the Khilafat Committee and the Burrabazar Congress Committee assembled at the residence of Mr. C. R. Das when Mr. Gandhi, Maulana Mahomed Ali and Pandit Motilal Nehru inspected them. In addressing the volunteers Mr. Gandhi said that he was very glad to see them. He believed that through the help of the volunteers he would be able to win swaraj. He knew that the volunteers enlisted themselves being prepared even to lay down their lives for the attainment of swaraj, for Khilafat and the Punjab. He advised them to maintain discipline . . . It had been complained to him by outsiders as well as by the Marwaris that the volunteers had some time been offensive. He very much regretted such conduct on the part of volunteers, if they had really done so.

Referring to the picketing, Mr. Gandhi said that they would continue doing so but that must be tempered with kindness, courtesy and friendly feeling. They would not do anything which would hurt the feeling of anybody as otherwise they would do the greatest harm and mischief to the cause.

Speaking of the apprehended arrest of Ali Brothers, he said that he knew that his two Brothers were soon going to be arrested and imprisoned and he hoped that if such a thing came to pass the volunteers should not be excited over the matter and should keep their passions under control . . . .

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-9-1921

37. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

[On or before *September 11, 1921*]

Interviewed by a press representative as to the published versions of the interview[1] between Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Mr. Gandhi the latter declined to make any statement whatsoever saying that though there was nothing secret about the interview, he questioned the right of the public to know all that had happened at interviews between two public men. He declined to make any statement also because he said that an attempt was made in all the imaginary reports[2] to discredit him and his cause, but he knew that both the cause and himself were absolutely safe in the hands of the poet, the reports notwithstanding.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 11-9-1921

[1] At Calcutta on September 6

[2] For example in the report in *The Statesman*, 10-9-1921

38. *EXPERIENCES IN ASSAM—II*

On the Brahmaputra

The ship is sailing on the river. The days of my third-class travel came to an end long ago. We are all sitting at the moment on the first-class deck. Whenever I think about the third-class, I feel ashamed of travelling by first or second class. But I know that, in a strenuous tour like this, where I am constantly on the move, my health cannot stand the strain of a journey by third-class. I believe that we should be sturdy enough to be able to travel by third-class, that our bodies should be sufficiently trained for the purpose. So long as we fight shy of travelling third-class, conditions in this class will not improve and its hardships will not disappear. If all the hundreds of public workers start travelling by first or second class, public funds will be exhausted in travelling and our ship of swaraj will make no progress. It is necessary for us every moment to pause and think before spending public funds. I say this, being ill at ease because of a remark which one rich gentleman, a public worker, made before me. The moment I brought up the subject of khadi, he said : "You cannot understand our plight. You can get a car whenever you want, you will get ten glasses of goat's milk if you ask for one, everyone gives you khadi; but others, even a wealthy person like me, will find public service an expensive job if I have to pay each time taxi and hotel fares and for all the khadi that I require." This gentleman is a member of the All-India Congress Committee; he does not hesitate to spend money; but I realize that his daily expenses in Bombay could not have amounted to less than twenty rupees. I do feel that there is a good deal of substance in his argument. However, I am helpless in my present situation. I know that my weakness has reduced my capacity to serve. I do not now have the courage to ask everyone to go walking. Because I myself am weak, I imagine others to be so and often unnecessarily take pity on them. Otherwise, one who wishes to serve the public does not have to spend overmuch. Third-class fares are not so high that one cannot afford the expense and, moreover, one should make it a point to spend nothing on transport at any place one visits. One should eat simple food and dress simply. But we have pampered ourselves so much that we think we cannot do what hundreds of thousands of other people do every day.

I had wanted to describe the river but came out instead,

with what has been troubling my mind. The river looks as vast as the sea. Far away in the distance, on the two sides, one sees the banks. The river is about two miles broad, or even more. The journey will take 15 hours. The peace on the river fills the heart with a sense of grandeur. The moon, hidden behind the clouds, is shining with a faint gleam on the water. The ship's propellers make a gentle sound as they cut through water. Except for this, there is peace all round. And yet I find it difficult to have peace of mind. Neither the river nor the ship is mine. It is through the favour of that same power whose tyranny has disillusioned me, whose operations have inflicted wounds on the country, enfeebled it and reduced it to a state of penury, that I sail on the river and go in this ship—this thought disturbs me in the midst of all this peace. Nevertheless, I cannot blame the Government. Why should I blame the Government if thirty crores of Indians do not understand their duty? Should I blame the usurer who charges me excessive interest, or myself for paying it? It is the business man's nature to trade with me. It is for me however to choose whether or not to trade with him. Why do I trade with him? Who can force foreign cloth on me if I do not want it? Realizing that it is my weakness to blame the power behind the trader, I recover my peace and get absorbed in my duty, aware that my work lies with the people.

Elephants of Assam

Assam is as well-known for its elephants as it is for the weaving skill of its women. I was even shown a work on *hasti vidya*[1], written on bark, which was two hundred years old. Besides the writing, it contained many beautiful pictures of elephants and other things. The colours used in these were exquisite, such as one hardly comes across nowadays. The paintings are so well proportioned that, looking at them, one cannot but take pride in the ancient art of Assam.

An elephant is valued at anything up to Rs. 6,000. He is used as a beast of burden and in hunting. A person who knows about these matters told me that a wild elephant is subjected to much cruelty when it is first caught. As the elephant likes music, the mahout also tries to win him over with it. It understands our language so well that it can clearly recognize words of anger or affection. This person told me that every elephant in Assam is familiar with the word *shabash*[2]. Needless to say, ivory is in

[1] Elephant lore

[2] Well done!

plenty in Assam. I was happy to learn that here not only is the elephant not killed for the sake of his tusks but that killing it for this purpose is actually forbidden.

Assam Silk

Two varieties of silk are produced in Assam. Both these are obtained from worms. One type of worm is called *andikeri* and the other *mooga*. In obtaining the former's silk, the worm is not destroyed in the process. Its cocoon is spun like cotton. The *mooga* spins its own silk. When the *mooga* has completed the spinning, it is exposed to sun and destroyed. The cocoon is then boiled and the silk is pulled out by wrapping it round a bobbin. This process was carried out before me. Both these varieties of silk are produced in large quantities in Assam but, though the industry is still alive, the use of foreign yarn has become widespread and many weavers—both men and women—use only such yarn as warp.

Processing of Cotton

I also observed cotton being processed. I see that fine cloth like that made in Andhra will by and by be produced here too. I have been given a sample recently made. I was shown saris of very fine cotton which were two hundred years old. In many places even Egyptian cotton has been planted. I saw such cotton being spun unginned. The other cotton, I saw, was being spun in the same way as it is done in Andhra. Each seed is first combed out with fish teeth, so that all the fibres are separated. The cotton that remains entangled in the comb is spun as it is and then woven into khadi. The seeds and the cotton which is still sticking to them are then separated and the latter is carded. Each seed is processed in this way. Such cotton is spun and the finest yarn is prepared out of it. If the women of Assam respond with zeal, there will be no limit to the help that they can give. I feel that Assam's capacity to help the swadeshi movement is even greater than that of the Punjab. If the women here take up spinning and weaving, they will do so out of love for the country and not for love of money. As in Andhra, each woman cards her own cotton.

Shonitpur

We have now reached Tezpur. Its ancient name is Shonitpur. It is said a British officer found it difficult to pronounce "Shonitpur". He asked what *shonit*[1] meant in Assamese and was

[1] A Sanskrit word for "blood"

told that the Assamese equivalent was *Tez*. He then named Shonitpur "Tezpur"! In ancient times, Tezpur was the capital of Banasura and it is for this reason that the authors of Puranas are supposed to have called it Shonitpur. The legend about this place says that Chitralekha carried off Aniruddha from Dwaraka and brought him here for Usha. It is said that Arjuna went right up to Manipur. Pandu is the first city we come to on the eastern banks of the Brahmaputra. The Pandavas, when living in disguise, came as far as this place. Five miles from Pandu on the river bank is Gauhati and we have arrived at Tezpur from there. Gauhati, too, has an ancient name. It is believed that the battle between Hari and Hara took place near Tezpur, and devotees even show the footsteps of Rudra on the spot where they fought. In this way, wherever I go, I get proofs of the unity of India in the past.

Planter-rule

Tezpur has a population of six thousand. Even so it has a municipality, a railway line, electricity and running water as well. How did it come to have all these things? The question can be readily answered. There are large tea gardens very near Tezpur. The railway line is for bringing the tea, which is then exported from this port. Indeed, the people believe that it is the planters who rule Assam. The British Government is there of course, but the real power is with the planters. Mr. Andrews says that it was to oblige the planters that the poor workers were beaten up at Chandpur.

The Brahmaputra water is not considered good for drinking, as the Ganga water is and, therefore, in many places, even with the river at their doorsteps, people use tap water. This water is filtered through some salts before it is used. In this very town a reservoir has been built at a height of ninety feet; water is filtered in it and then supplied to the people through taps.

East Bengal

A Scene beyond Description

After leaving Dibrugarh, the train passed through some parts whose beauty is still vivid before my eyes. Lumding Junction may be regarded as the border of Assam. After leaving it, the railway line ascends gradually. It climbs on, one ghat after another. It can be said that the ghats on the way to Poona can stand no comparison with these. There is a sudden change in the air. Even the sick would feel fresh. Wherever one looks, there are green hillocks. There is no limit to the clouds in these parts.

Quite often one sees them below the hills. Sometimes we clearly see puffs of steam going up and mingling with the clouds. The large rivers flowing down the ghats seem to be running a race with the train. I have not seen such a sight anywhere else in the world. I have seen a number of them in Africa, England and other places, but I do not think there is any which could be compared with this.

Our destination was Silchar. It has a very heavy rainfall, no less than two hundred inches. Hence the humidity here is extreme. Wherever one looks, one finds pools of water. Silchar is at the foot of the hills. So we found the heat there to be oppressive. But the people's love was such that thousands had collected in the maidan despite the rain. At every place, the gift consisted of an address always inscribed on khadi. The days of ostentatious addresses are over. I was afraid that people in these parts would insist on English, but did not find that they did anywhere. People have grown so used to Hindustani that even in Bengal anyone speaking in English would feel embarrassed. In Silchar, we stayed with a gentleman called Babu Kaminikumar Chanda. Before the days of non-co-operation, he was a member of the Imperial Council and practised as a lawyer. He has now boycotted the legislature, given up practice and is working for non-co-operation. His wife and daughters have taken up spinning. The spinning-wheels which I saw were rather inconvenient to work. They were small-sized and none too strong, with a very small plank. They could produce very little yarn. Even so, the spinning-wheel has taken its place in the national schools and elsewhere.

After spending a day in Silchar, we went on to Sylhet. There, Muslims form about fifty-five per cent of the population. There is relatively little awakening among them here in these parts. It is because of this that only Rs. 216 were collected for the Khilafat and Smyrna Funds despite this large percentage of Muslims. The entire burden of the work is borne by a Muslim lawyer of Sylhet, named Maulvi Mahomed Abdulla. Thanks to his efforts, a school for weaving has been functioning. Incidental to this, some carpentry work is being done and spinning-wheels and looms are being made. This enterprising spirit has developed after the starting of non-co-operation. The meeting in Sylhet was convened in an *Idgah*[1]. Mahomed Ali said that he had not seen anywhere else an *Idgah* as beautiful as this. It is located on the most beautiful hill in Sylhet. About five thousand people can be accommodated on

[1] Mosque

that hill. All round it there is green grass and below there is an open maidan with a lake in it. Both the hill itself and the place below it were filled to capacity with people. The population of Sylhet must be 20,000, but, as people had come from the entire district, there were actually more than 20,000 at the meeting.

Chatgong

From Sylhet we went on to Chittagong. Its Bengali pronunciation is as I have spelt above. This is a large and beautiful port. It is known as "Chatgong" because it consists of four villages. There are many Arabs in this place and, as a great Pir once lived there, it is also known as Islamabad. Many Buddhists also used to live there and so they too had their own name for it. There is a large river near Chittagong and, only a small distance away, is the Bay of Bengal. Because of the large number of hills, there is much natural beauty. The court and the railway office there are on the largest hill. A well-known lawyer of this place, Mr. N. Gupta, has much work to his credit. He has given up his large practice. He is captain of the volunteer corps. Hundreds of volunteers in Bengal have started wearing khadi shirts and the swaraj cap. All of them wear the dhoti. Volunteers on the Bombay side look upon the dhoti as an obstruction in their work. I did not find the volunteers in these parts thought so. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims in East Bengal wear the dhoti. The chief outward difference one finds is that, whereas Hindus are generally bare-headed, Muslims wear caps. After the spread of khadi, however, some Bengali Hindu volunteers too have started wearing khadi caps.

If Ali Brothers Are Arrested?

On reaching Sylhet, I saw a telegram reporting the arrest of the Ali Brothers. I, therefore, began to refer to this in my speeches. I am quite convinced that the two brothers are completely innocent. By this I mean that so long as they adhere to non-violent non-co-operation, they will not be guilty of violence in thought, word or deed and will dissuade others from it. They are holding on to their pledge, straining every nerve in the effort. They are, however, brave men. It is not through fear that they refrain from employing violence or spreading the spirit of violence among others, but with a deliberate effort keep their anger and their emotions under control. When such innocent persons are put into prison, it is natural that the people's feelings should be aroused. If, at that time, the people turn towards the right path, they will

be saved; if, on the contrary, they lose self-control and take the wrong path, they will be destroyed. The only way, therefore, is to remain peaceful on the imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and, giving up the indifference we have shown till now in following swadeshi, take to it with greater enthusiasm and make a bonfire of whatever foreign cloth we may still have with us. Everyone who has till now been slack in starting work on the spinning-wheel should shake off his indifference and spend some time daily in spinning. Those who still commit the sin of sending their children to Government schools should stop doing so; those lawyers who have not had, to this day, the courage to give up practice should now sacrifice it. Only if everyone acts in this manner shall we succeed on the Khilafat issue, win swaraj, be able soon to open the prison gates with our own hands and secure the release of our innocent Brothers and others who are in prison through the wrath of the Government. I explained this to the audiences at great length.

VOLUNTEERS

From Chittagong onwards, I observed that the volunteers were working harder. I saw in them better capacity for enforcing discipline. Even though a large procession has been taken out at that place, no one rushed towards the car from behind. Thouands stood in lines in silence and let the car pass. As even cries of victory had been disallowed, the scene appeared grand to me.

STRIKERS

It was at this place that there was a large contingent of striking [railway] workers. I spent much time with them. But as my speech to them is to appear in *Navajivan*,[1] I will say nothing about it here.

BARISAL

After leaving Chittagong, we went to Barisal. On the way to Barisal is a place called Chandpur. Here I saw the spot where innocent workers had been assaulted by the Gurkhas. My heart bled and our slavery was brought home to me. These were only poor labourers. India came to know something about them because of the strike that took place on their account. If the persons who were brought out of their homes at midnight at the point of the bayonet had been important men, the country would have been afire. Swaraj should mean equal justice for the rich and the

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

poor. Will this be so in our swaraj? If it is not, that swaraj would not be real swaraj.

Barisal is the home of the well-known leader of venerable age, Babu Ashwini Kumar Dutt. The principal crop in these parts is paddy. Shri Ashwini Kumar Dutt had started in this place, forty years ago, a magnificent school at a cost of Rs. 50,000. Today, the school has joined the non-co-operation camp. Its principal is Shri Jagdish Babu. He is a life-long *brahmachari*[1]. He is over fifty at present. Everyone told me that he is a learned man, with an excellent character and full of humility.

It can be said that the work of swadeshi is being carried on fairly well in Barisal. In the foregoing schools, students showed me the yarn which they had spun; it was very fine. There is a separate weaving department besides, with about eighty looms. At present they have goods worth Rs. 15,000 produced on the looms. Except in Shri Joshi's factory in Surat, nowhere have I observed as much cleanliness as I found in this weaving-shed. I did not find a single piece of yarn or a speck of dirt on the floor. The work, too, I saw, was clean. The weaving school was started only this year.

In Barisal, I found the volunteers to have better control than even those in Chittagong. Even though it was a vast gathering, excellent order was maintained. The volunteers had kept a way ready for us. We found things very easy for us as repeated requests had been made in advance that people should not try to touch my feet in reverence.

Barisal is one of those places where the Hindus and the Muslims, during the Bengal partition days, lived in harmony with one another despite their differences. Everyone gave credit for this to Babu Ashwini Kumar.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 11-9-1921

[1] One who observes *brahmacharya*, celibacy

39. FALLEN SISTERS

There are many other experiences of Barisal worth recording. But I do not have the time to narrate all. There is one, however, which I simply cannot omit and that concerns the fallen sisters of Barisal. I shall never forget that scene. Some of these sisters of Barisal are enrolled on the Congress register and have even contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. There are about 350 of them. They had written to me, asking me whether they could meet me. They wished to take greater part in Congress work. Why should they not, if elected, hold offices as well? On my return at night, from the meeting, I saw about a hundred women standing on one side. I took the hint. Very cordially, I led them to the terrace. I kept an interpreter with me and dismissed all the other men. I asked them to speak out without any reservations. There were, among them, four or five girls too about ten years of age. Some were past their youth. The remaining must have been between twenty and thirty. I give a summary of their conversation with me in the form of questions and answers.

QUESTION : I am glad, sisters, that you have come. You are as sisters and daughters to me. I wish to share your suffering. If, however, you keep anything from me, I shall not be able to help you.

ANSWER : We shall give truthful replies to all your questions.

Q : Some of you look advanced in age. Do these still follow your profession?

A : No, sir. Those of us who are advanced in age beg for a living.

Q : Does this become you?

A : Hunger drives one to do anything.

Q : Are these little girls in the same plight?

A : We have come here with the hope that you will show us some way out. None of us wishes to continue in this profession.

Q : What about those of you who are young? Are they not allured by the pleasures which this profession offers?

A : There may be a few who are.

Q : Do any of you get children?

A : Some get them.

Q: How many of you are there?

A: Three hundred and fifty.

Q: How many children in all do you have?

A: About ten at present.

Q: Are they boys or girls?

A: Six are girls, and the rest, boys.

Q: What do you do with your sons?

A: One is grown up and married to one of the girls among us.

Q: Would you entrust your daughters to me?

A: We would if you undertook to look after them.

Q: How many of you are serious about giving up your profession?

A: All.

Q: Will you do the work I suggest?

A: We know what you want. Some of us have already started spinning.

Q: I am very glad to know that. But have those sisters who have started spinning given up their profession?

A: Do we not have our debts? How can we maintain ourselves by this work alone?

Q: How much do you earn at present? You feel ashamed in replying. I can understand your hesitation. I am talking to you, but my heart is in agony. Do let me know what you earn at the moment.

A: Many of us earn sixty rupees, which comes to two rupees a day.

Q: I know that you cannot earn that amount by spinning. You should, however, give up now the many tempting pleasures in which you indulge at present. It is not you alone whom I ask to do this. My wife also has stopped wearing jewellery. There are girls of tender age with me. Their parents can afford to give them jewellery and other things and yet they dress themselves in half-length saris of khadi and wear no jewellery. So it does not pain me at all to request you to give up your adornments.

A: We shall try to make our lives simple. Some will do so immediately, and some others by and by. One of us gave away all she had to the Ramakrishna Mission and now lives by begging.

Q: I bow to that sister. It is certainly good that she has given away everything. But I find that (turning towards her) you have sound limbs; it would, therefore, be more virtuous for you to live in a simple manner by spinning. I should like every man and

woman in the country who is not a cripple to feel ashamed to beg. It is now possible to say this. We have discovered the spinning-wheel, which is our *kamadhenu*[1]. I would not be satisfied even with you sisters taking up spinning. You should learn to weave and card as well. If you do, you will be able to earn all you need for a living.

A: Show us the way and we shall follow it.

Q: How many of you are ready to give up your profession to-morrow?

In response to this, eleven sisters stood up at once. I asked them to think it over. They told me that their decision was final. They had already thought over the matter. The problem was how to make the thing possible. So I said:

Marriage is now out of the question for you. So, no matter how you have lived in the past, if henceforth you live pure lives the world will forget your sins. Further, you may keep yourselves aloof from the affairs of the people with homes and families, that is, can become *sannyasinis*. You can serve Bharatavarsha. You could almost clothe the whole of Barisal if a large number of you spin and weave for twelve hours daily, singing devotional songs the while. If all the women of your class in the country give up their unworthy profession and take up the sacred work of spinning and weaving, the country will prosper in no time. I hope, therefore, that you eleven sisters will stick to your decision. I am here just on a tour, but I shall commend your case strongly to the local leaders and I am certain that the local Congress Committee will help you in every way. May God bless you.

Reader! I do not know how you, whether you are a man or a woman, will think or feel on reading this. I have not described to you everything. I have painted the scene as best as I could. One can have a true idea of the reality only by seeing it. I was all the while overpowered with shame and was trying to realize the magnitude of the crime perpetrated by man against woman. These women did not choose their fallen life; it is man who drove them to it. For the gratification of his desires, he has committed a great atrocity on women. Anyone who is moved by this should, by way of atonement if for nothing else, give a helping hand to fallen sisters. As the picture of these sisters grows more vivid in my mind, the thought strikes me,—what if they had been my sisters or daughters? Why this 'if'? They are so indeed. It is my and every man's task to work for their uplift. This is why the

[1] Sacred cow which according to fable, yielded all that one desired

music of the spinning-wheel is so dear to me. The wheel is a kind of wall for the protection of women. I cannot think of any other thing which may serve as a support for such sisters in India. The task, however, cannot be accomplished till good men in every city take it up. In Barisal, the persons who are working among these sisters are the noble-minded Shri Sharat Kumar Ghosh and his co-worker, Shri Bhupati Babu, a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation. I merely took advantage of the ground prepared by them.

Sisters, now that you know, you too must reflect on this. You alone can reach the inner shrine in the hearts of the fallen sisters. Till you come forward to work for the emancipation of such women, efforts by a man like me will be unavailing.

Swaraj means the emancipation of the fallen.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

40. MY NOTES

CHILDREN'S BLESSINGS

Many sisters write to me, as also many youths; it is only from children that I seldom get a letter. An unexpected letter has come from one and here it is:

> I am very eager to do what you want us to do. I have started wearing khadi. ...[1] and I have believed in non-co-operation from the very beginning. ...[2] did not believe in it. But now he believes in it. If you get all the children in the country to join non-co-operation, your success will be certain.

At every place I ask for women's blessings in this holy struggle, for I believe that they are pure and tender-hearted, that they are free from guile or deceit. They sincerely believe this struggle to be for a holy cause.

But children are even more innocent at heart than women. In what way can one ask for their blessings? Can they take even one step without their parents' permission? Hence, I have done nothing in regard to children except to play with them. I was, therefore, pleased to get this letter. I can see that the language is not a child's. The letter seems to have been inspired by their teacher. But it is indeed what I ask and desire, that parents give

[1] & [2] The source omits the name.

their children education in the essentials of dharma, teach them non-co-operation with sin and the use of the weapon of non-violence and obtain their blessings in this sacred task.

Women, children, the lame, the crippled, all can join this movement, and they should. The greater the number of these that join, the sooner shall we win. There is no distinction here of high or low, of big or small. Anyone who has a big heart is big, and anyone with a small heart is small, is a cripple. Hence children's blessings are sweet to me. The Viceroy's goodwill will not help us to win swaraj, but the blessings of pure-hearted children certainly will.

How to Celebrate Diwali

A gentleman has been good enough to remind me that if, as it happened last year, I do not write about Diwali in time, many people will pay no attention to the matter and go in for unnecessary expenditure. There are two months yet for Diwali; during this period, we can win swaraj and celebrate a true festival of lights. We should, therefore, complete boycott of foreign cloth during this month and see that we are able to produce all our requirements of cloth with the help of the spinning-wheel so that we may have swaraj in October and then celebrate a true Diwali. The right way to prepare for the Diwali celebrations is to secure swaraj before that time. Why should it be impossible for us to win swaraj within this time? The only obstacle in our way is our weakness.

Supposing, however, we do not get swaraj before Diwali, what should we do? Most certainly, we should go into mourning. We should prepare no sweets, indulge in no feasting and no merry-making and, refraining from all enjoyments, pray to God. It is only after he had practised penance for fourteen years that Bharat[1] saw the day when he could celebrate Diwali. Shall we act otherwise? Why sing when there is no occasion for singing? Why eat when there is no appetite? Why celebrate anything while we do not have swaraj? On Diwali day we should eat the simplest of meals. Rising early, we may sing devotional songs and spend the entire day in spinning. During these days, we should wear nothing but khadi and, if we wish to gift any clothes, we should give only khadi. How can we have fireworks at all?

There are, thus, two ways of celebrating Diwali; one is to celebrate it after we have won swaraj and the other is to work for

[1] Brother of Rama in the epic *Ramayana*

securing swaraj. Which of the two courses we should adopt depends on the strength we possess.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-9-1921

41. SPEECH AT MIDNAPORE[1]

September 13, 1921

Mr. Gandhi said:

From the nature of my reception at Midnapore I cannot persuade myself to believe that the educated folk of Bengal have been estranged from me or have discountenanced my movement for the attainment of swaraj.

He then gave his message to the people of Midnapore to adopt the swadeshi cult, to preserve the non-violent nature in their propaganda work and to strive for the Hindu-Mussulman unity. If these three things be uppermost in their thoughts, words and actions, said Mr. Gandhi, then the attainment of swaraj, he believed, could not be delayed beyond the end of the current year, if not by the end of October next.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-9-1921

42. TELEGRAM TO DR. T. S. S. RAJAN

[Before *September 14, 1921*]

ARRANGE A SHORT TOUR[2] WITH THREE-HOUR SILENCE DAILY.

The Hindu, 11-10-1921

43. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE WAY TO MADRAS,
September 14 [1921]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Mahadev has given me a graphic description of Shantiniketan. It has made me sad. There is dissension there and even bitterness. You yourself are torn by internal conflict he says. I know that you

[1] At a college playground

[2] Of Madras Province

will find your peace. Whether I lose you in the struggle or keep you, you will remain the same to me even as Polak is. I know too that you will do as the spirit leads you. I want you not to be sad on my account.

Mahadev tells me you resented my taking away Banarasidas. But I am not taking him away. He wrote to me and told me too, that so far as you were concerned he was free to settle where he chose. From the point of view of the work he has to do, I told him Bombay was better. And he made the choice. But he is free to remain in Shantiniketan and I shall still try to find money for him so long as he works for the cause of the emigrants.

Here is Natrajan's[1] letter about your proposed visit to East Africa.

I expect to be in Madras for eight days. With love.

Yours,
MOHAN

PS.

CARE CONGRESS OFFICE

I have just seen the enclosed. I read the original in *The Statesman*[2]. I felt that no relative of the Poet could have written such an untruth. No relative was present at the interview[3], and I took no notice of it. But evidently there is a relative at the back. Or the *Bengalee* would not have taken it seriously. Will not the Poet read it and if it is an untruth will he not contradict it? Even you can. But please consult the Poet and do what you can.

From a photostat: G.N. 987

44. *MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CITIZENS*

[After *September 14, 1921*][4]

The following message sent by Mahatma Gandhi to Bombay was booked to us from Waltair yesterday, but has not till now been received.

Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair under Sections 107 and 108 to be called upon to give security, to be on good behaviour for one year. The place and date of trial is unknown.

The Begum Sahiba and Mr. Hayat were permitted to see him after arrest.

[1] Editor, *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay

[2] Of 10-9-1921

[3] At Calcutta on September 6, C. F. Andrews being present

[4] Mahomed Ali's arrest referred to in the message was on September 14

He and I were going to address a meeting outside the Station. He was arrested. I continued going to the meeting and addressed them.

There is no cause for sorrow, but every cause for congratulation. There should be no hartal. Perfect peace and calmness should be observed. I regard the arrest as a prelude to swaraj and the redress of Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs, if we can remain non-violent, retain Hindu-Muslim unity despite the madness of some Moplahs, and fulfil the swadeshi programme.

I hope every Indian, man or woman, will completely boycott foreign cloth and take up spinning or weaving during every spare minute.

By striving like the Maulana, be insistent on religious and national rights.

Let us earn imprisonment. I am conscious of the Maulana's innocence and I am sure the imprisonment of the innocent will enable the nation to reach the cherished goal.

The Maulana was quite calm. So is the Begum Sahiba. She accompanies me during travel. So does Maulana Azad Sobhani.

GANDHI

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 18-9-1921

45. NOTES

EFFECT OF HARTAL

Mr. Konda Venkatappayya justifies the hartal in Guntur and gives some other valuable information in a letter I have just received. I give it below for the benefit of the reader:[1]

> As regards the hartal, you hold it to be a bad step. However, please allow me to state that the awakening which the people of Guntur have had since the days of the hartal was almost impossible to secure even through years of strenuous propaganda. The restraint and self-discipline, which they have cultivated within this short time, are also remarkable. No doubt there was some disturbance on the fifth day of the hartal. . . . The reason for our release is not the discovery of anything to contradict the evidence against us, but the fact that the voice of the people was against him [the District Magistrate]. The merchants closed the shops, the pleaders boycotted the courts, the people assembling daily in huge monster meetings were stoutly protesting against the proceedings more than all. There was a move amongst the clerks in the Government offices to resign their

[1] Only relevant portions are reproduced here.

appointments. Almost everybody in the town felt the injustice of the proceedings. These were the causes of our release. Under the circumstances it is difficult to over-estimate the importance and the utility of the hartal. The driving force, which had brought about such union amongst the people, is in my humble opinion not a little due to the hartal, which was most willingly undertaken by the merchants and heartily appreciated by the people in general. Arrangements were made to supply necessaries to the poor and the needy by keeping a few of the shops open. At a large meeting of the labourers in the factories, shops and railway goods-sheds, help voluntarily offered to them by way of relief to the needy amongst them was refused. They stated that they would most willingly suffer for the sake of the cause rather than receive any help.

The above facts have, I hope, at least disclosed some extenuating circumstances. . . .

My general opposition to hartal without permission of the Working Committee must still stand. That the hartal in Guntur bore good fruit is creditable to Guntur and its workers. But the very description given by Mr. Venkatappayya shows, that it is attended with danger and requires skilful handling. My own analysis of the situation in Guntur is, that the arrests prior to the hartal galvanized the Gunturians into activity. In so far as the hartal overawed the Government into discharging the leaders, it was bad. I would again suggest, that it was the renunciation of pleaders and the threatened resignation of the clerks which brought about the release. And if it was the hartal which determined the renunciation of the pleaders, it was decidedly good. What we need is greater response to the concrete programme of non-co-operation, and if we can get it by hartals, I for one would always advocate them.

Young India, 15-9-1921

46. A PROTEST AGAINST BURNING

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

Your idea that all foreign cloth collected on the 1st of August should either be burnt or sent to Smyrna, with the support it found in the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee, has bewildered me; and the issues it involves appear to me to be so far-reaching, that I have ventured to write this letter. The first of August is come and gone, and that which is destroyed can never be restored; but in our calmer moments we

may reflect on our actions in a different light from that in which they were conceived, and prevent a recurrence of what on reconsideration we should find to be wrong.

The non-co-operation movement, shorn of its superfluities and the passing tangle of conflicting opinion, has always appeared to me to be a symbol of India's regeneration, and a mighty echo of the voice of its soul, forgotten through many years of abandoned ideals, broken power, selfishness and ignorance, and the spirit of ahimsa in which it was conceived was to me the unfailing cure of all ills of life, should man rise to that height of the soul. But I cannot help thinking of the burning of all foreign cloth in honour of the memory of Lokamanya Tilak as a travesty of what, in my humble opinion, I regarded as the lofty ideals that inspired the movement.

It is argued that all foreign cloth should be burnt, because (1) it is a mark of dependence and a badge of slavery for the rich and poor alike, and (2) it is a garb of sin forced on India by the wickedness of the East India Company and perpetuated by our own helplessness and ignorance. In both cases we can get rid of it only by destruction; and the clothing of even the poorest among us with such cloth would be as sinful as offering rotten or poisonous food to a hungry man. But, with strange inconsistency, we are told that it may, however, be sent to the people of Smyrna.

I do not wish to discuss the assumptions on which the foregoing arguments are based; but, while I realize the necessity of swadeshi and believe in the moral and partially economic value of khadi, the revival of the spinning-wheel and restoration of the great staple industry of India, I think it would be easy to prove that, so long as the total imports of India exceed four times the value of its foreign cloth, we are as many times dependent and so slaves for our other requirements, which, too, should on that account be burnt. It could even more convincingly be argued that books written by foreigners and in a foreign language, machinery, medicines and other products of modern science and human skill and intelligence, in which, for the present, they have advanced more than we have, are a much deeper mark of dependence and a greater badge of slavery, mental and physical, than foreign cloth, and we should get rid of these as well by destruction. And then, in the opinion of some, why not in the same way of the foreigner too—the source of all our ills?

If, again, by yielding to the wickedness of the East India Company which crippled our weavers and killed our industry, Indians of those times and through them their sons of today are guilty of sin, which may be atoned for only by setting fire to the cause of their crime, why not burn only *English* cloth and spare the rest? Again, if one may not offer rotten or poisonous food to a poor and starving Indian, might he offer it to a helpless Turk? To send our cast-off foreign clothes to the people of Smyrna

appears to me to be much more sinful than offering them to our own countrymen; for it is dishonourable for one nation to offer its shreds and leavings to another, and the wrong done to Islam by the foreigners, the allies, is more recent and in the opinion of many, greater than the harm done by the East India Company to ourselves; and can we regard it as moral or in any way justifiable to send to the people of Smyrna cloth manufactured by those very foreigners and cast off by us as the garb of sin? Well may such charity be said to degrade both the giver and the receiver.

In conclusion I would point out, Sir, that the analogy between rotten food and foreign cloth can hardly be maintained; and so long as there are thousands of our own countrymen who are literally naked and enough khadi has not been manufactured to clothe them, there are many who would regard it as a sin to burn a single yard of foreign cloth or send it out of the country when it is required more urgently at home.

I do not question the spectacular effect of destruction by fire or its efficacy to catch popular imagination and rouse quick, if temporary, enthusiasm; but I cannot think that, you have been actuated by such considerations in the face of such utter need of so many of our poor, naked and famine-stricken countrymen.

Yours, etc.,
N. V. THADANI[1]

HYDERABAD, SIND,
3rd August, 1921

I gladly print Mr. Thadani's closely-reasoned letter. I have already admitted the weakness of the argument in favour of sending foreign cloth to Smyrna. But it is a concession to Mussulman opinion. Nevertheless the use of foreign cloth is poison in India, certainly not in Smyrna; for the cloth industry has never been Smyrna's lung, as it has been India's. In burning foreign clothes we are burning our taste for foreign fineries. The effect upon India would have been equally disastrous, if Japan instead of England had tempted us in the first instance. The motive was to punish ourselves and not the foreigner. We are boycotting not British but all foreign cloth. The one would be meaningless as the other is a sacred duty. The idea of burning springs not from hate but from repentance of our past sins. A moment's reflection must show the writer, that burning must make us earnest and thus stimulate, as it has stimulated, fresh manufacture. The disease had gone so deep that a surgical operation was a necessity. The ill-clad or the naked millions of India need no charity but work that they can easily do

[1] Principal, Hindu College, Delhi and Sind National College, Hyderabad, Sind; educationist; author of the *Mystery of the Mahabharata*

in their cottages. Have not the poor any feeling of self-respect or patriotism? Is the gospel of swadeshi only for the well-to-do?

Young India, 15-9-1921

47. *CONFUSION OF THOUGHT*

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

DEAR SIR,

I have seen your arguments about the utility of picketing. The very same arguments appealed to non-co-operating students of Bengal, when they fell flat before the gates of Calcutta University College and the Senate House, and thereby hoped to dissuade the law examinees from taking their examinations. With folded hands they entreated their examinee brothers not to drink the insidious poison. And you are certainly aware of the amount of success they obtained in their novel way of picketing. The examination halls wore a deserted appearance and a subsequent supplementary examination had to be held. But it was you who then disapproved of the picketing, and everything had to be given up. The results so nobly achieved were lost, and Bengal repents today that her youths have a tarnished fame on their brow to be proud of. When the picketing party laid themselves flat before the gateways, they did so on the very argument that "diseased persons have got to be helped against themselves." As brothers, who deemed themselves blessed in truly understanding your advice about modern education and in possessing boldness enough to leave their colleges, they thought it a duty incumbent upon them to dissuade their brothers from appearing at the examination. Lying flat on the ground is indisputably an oriental way of moral persuasion. It was nothing but humility preached in its real aspect. If I am truly inspired with the feeling that drinking is a dire vice and everyone has to be saved from its clutches, shall I be deemed using physical force if I lie down in front of the drinking den and ask the intending drinker to trample over my body and get his drink? Here in this case I appeal to his heart. And by moral persuasion I understand appealing to the heart. By laying themselves in front of the Senate House, the Bengal pickets appealed to the heart of the examinees and certainly that was moral persuasion. I shall be glad to know why you disapproved of the method of the Bengal pickets, as they used to appeal to the heart of the examinees and did not use physical force in any way.

BENARES, *Yours, etc.*,
12th July, 1921 S. N. RAY

The writer assumes without warrant, that I would countenance liquor shop picketing of the type described in his letter. If the unseemly obstruction of the passage had been persisted in, there would have been a revulsion of feeling in the country, such as would have thoroughly discredited non-co-operation. Moreover, it is a far-fetched analogy to compare the drink habit with education. In the matter of education, it is a conflict of ideals, and non-co-operation is for this generation a new ideal. Whereas in the matter of drink, the conflict is between abstinence and a recognized vice. A young lad considers it a virtue to go to a Government college, a drinker knows drinking to be an evil habit. The educated youth read newspapers, know all the arguments for and against. Visitors to liquor shops read nothing, and not being in the habit of attending meetings, hear nothing. Picketing, therefore, in the case of colleges and schools was not only superfluous, but in the manner it was carried out, constituted a sort of violence utterly unjustified in any event, and for a non-co-operator a breach of his pledge. I am glad, therefore, that the picketing stopped, if it did, as a result of my severe criticism.

Young India, 15-9-1921

48. OUR FALLEN SISTERS

The first occasion I had of meeting those women who earn their livelihood out of their shame was at Coconada in the Andhra province. There it was a few moments' interview with only half a dozen of them. The second occasion was at Barisal.[1] Over one hundred of them met by appointment. They had sent a letter in advance, asking for an interview and telling me that they had become members of the Congress and subscribed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, but could not understand my advice not to seek office in the various Congress Committees. They wound up by saying, that they wished to seek my advice as to their future welfare. The gentleman who handed me the letter did so with great hesitation, not knowing whether I would be offended or pleased with the receipt of the letter. I put him at ease by assuring him, that it was my duty to serve these sisters if I could in any way.

For me the two hours I passed with these sisters is a treasured memory. They told me that they were over 350 in the midst of a population of about 20,000 men, women and children. They

[1] *Vide* "The Fallen Sisters", 11-9-1921.

represent the shame of the men of Barisal, and the sooner Barisal gets rid of it, the better for its great name. And what is true of Barisal is true, I fear, of every city. I mention Barisal, therefore, as an illustration. The credit of having thought of serving these sisters belongs to some young men of Barisal. Let me hope that Barisal will soon be able to claim the credit, too, of having eradicated the evil.

Of all the evils for which man has made himself responsible, none is so degrading, so shocking or so brutal as his abuse of the better half of humanity to me, the female sex, not the weaker sex. It is the nobler of the two, for it is even today the embodiment of sacrifice, silent suffering, humility, faith and knowledge. A woman's intuition has often proved truer than man's arrogant assumption of superior knowledge. There is method in putting Sita before Rama and Radha before Krishna. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief, that this gambling in vice has a place in our evolution because it is rampant and in some cases even state-regulated in civilized Europe. Let us not also perpetuate the vice on the strength of Indian precedents. We should cease to grow the moment we cease to discriminate between virtue and vice, and slavishly copy the past which we do not fully know. We are proud heirs to all that was noblest and best in the by-gone age. We must not dishonour our heritage by multiplying past errors. In a self-respecting India, is not every woman's virtue as much every man's concern as his own sister's? Swaraj means ability to regard every inhabitant of India as our own brother or sister.

And so, as a man I hung my head in shame before these hundred sisters. Some were elderly, most were between twenty and thirty, and two or three were girls below twelve. Between them all, they told me, they had six girls and four boys, the eldest of whom was married to one of their own class. The girls were to be brought up to the same life as themselves, unless something else was possible. That these women should have considered their lot to be beyond repair, was like a stab in the living flesh. And yet they were intelligent and modest. Their talk was dignified, their answers were clean and straight. And for the moment their determination was as firm as that of any satyagrahi. Eleven of them promised to give up their present life and take to spinning and weaving from the following day, if they received a helping hand. The others said they would take time to think, for they did not wish to deceive me.

Here is work for the citizens of Barisal. Here is work for all true servants of India, men as well as women. If there are 350

unhappy sisters in a population of 20,000, there may be 52,50,000 in all India. But I flatter myself with the belief that four fifths of the population of India, which live in the villages and are purely agricultural, are not touched by the vice. The lowest figure for all India would therefore be 10,50,000 women living on the sale of their own honour. Before these unfortunate sisters could be weaned from their degradation, two conditions have to be fulfilled. We men must learn to control our passions, and these women should be found a calling that would enable them to earn an honourable living. The movement of non-co-operation is nothing, if it does not purify us and restrain our evil passions. And there is no occupation but spinning and weaving which all can take up without overcrowding. These sisters, the vast majority of them, need not think of marriage. They agreed that they could not. They must therefore become the true *sannyasinis* of India. Having no cares of life but of service, they can spin and weave to their heart's content. One million fifty thousand women deligently weaving every day for eight hours means that number of rupees per day for an impoverished India. These sisters told me they earned as much as two rupees per day. But then they admitted, that they had many things needed to pander to man's lust, which they could discard when they took to spinning and weaving, reverting to a natural life. By the time I had finished with my interviews, they knew without my telling them, why they could not be office-bearers in Congress Committees if they did not give up their sinfulness. None could officiate at the altar of swaraj, who did not approach it with pure hands and a pure heart.

Young India, 15-9-1921

49. REPRESSION IN SIND

The following note[1] was prepared at the end of June by Mr. Ghanshyam Jethanand Shivdasani[2], and like the others has lain with me unattended to during my wanderings. The reader is familiar with the Matiari shooting, and the trial and convictions of Swami Krishnanand[3] and others, which took place after June.

Young India, 15-9-1921

[1] Published in *Young India*, 15-9-1921 and 22-9-1921; not reproduced here.

[2] Deputy Leader, Sind Congress Assembly Party; Secretary, Lok Sevak Mandal, Bombay

[3] *Vide* "A Mock Trial", 25-8-1921; also Appendix I.

50. *APPEAL TO HINDI-LOVERS*

MADRAS,
September 15, 1921

DEAR HINDI-LOVERS,

For three years now, the work of spreading Hindi has been going on in Madras. Money was collected in Bombay for this special purpose. However, the work has now increased to such an extent that this amount as well as what is forthcoming in Madras itself is no longer adequate. I am convinced that the work in Madras is going on well.

If you are satisfied and if you have sympathy for this great cause, I earnestly appeal to you to give liberally all you can by way of financial assistance.

Yours,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : S.N. 8156

51. *INTERVIEW TO "DAILY EXPRESS"*

MADRAS,
September 15, 1921

Taking advantage of the arrival of Mr. Gandhi in Madras on Thursday morning, a representative of the *Daily Express* called on the non-co-operation leader and interviewed him in regard to various questions that are at present agitating the minds of the public in which Mr. Gandhi is either directly or indirectly concerned.

Asked what proportion of the Crore Fund had been collected and where the money had been deposited, Mr. Gandhi said that the bulk of the Fund had been collected and was deposited with the several provincial committees. So far as he was aware the monies were deposited in various banks the largest part of it being deposited in Bombay.

[REPRESENTATIVE:] How will the amount collected be utilized?

[GANDHIJI:] The amount collected is being utilized chiefly for swadeshi, i.e., for encouraging hand-spinning and hand-weaving, in national educational institutions, for famine relief and in connection with the temperance campaign and the untouchables.

You may take it roughly that 50 per cent will be devoted to hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

In view of the outbreaks of violence that have occurred in Malabar, and in other centres previously, what steps will you take to ensure adherence to non-violence?

The only answer that I can give to this question is that I will do it by speeches, by talks in private also, by correspondence and by popularizing hand-spinning, because I consider hand-spinning as the greatest and the most efficacious antidote. If I could only get the whole of India to become busy with this development, it would stop all violence in the movement.

Do you think that there are bound to be exceptions to observance of non-violence as in the case of the Moplahs?

Yes, there are bound to be exceptions, but I am positive that there would have been much greater violence, more widespread, if there had been no non-co-operation continuously emphasizing non-violence. I should like to answer fully and frankly all the questions that may arise from my answer in order to make my position absolutely clear.

With regard to the question of picketing, I take it that there is a strong body of opinion that objects to picketing. If you find, after experience, that the two opposing forces would result in any form of disorder, do you intend that, in spite of that, picketing shall continue?

Yes, it will continue so long as there is no violence used by those who are picketing. I would not take into consideration the violence that may be offered either by the liquor dealers or by the people who want to visit these liquor shops; the third party being the Government. In several cases in Bihar, the Magistrate had actually given half a crown and said: "Here's half a crown, you go and insist upon drinking, because it is your birthright and you are entitled to drink." So of that kind of violence, I shall take no notice so long as the non-violent party remain true to their principles, but if they do not remain true then, of course, all picketing will cease.

Then there is the question of the boycott of cloth. My information here is that there has been an increase in the price of the Indian goods that come from Bombay. If the boycott of imported goods continues, I calculate myself that there is bound to be a further increase in the price of Indian-made goods. If that occurs, will it affect your campaign?

It would not affect my campaign because it is really not a question of the mills. I continually bring to the ears of the people

that true swadeshi means home-production. I therefore want the people to be totally indifferent to the mill manufactures.

Even of the Indian mills?

Yes. I am not boycotting Indian mills as such, because that is unnecessary. But if the people fall back upon Indian mills, only then I will boycott Indian mills also because they will not solve the ultimate problem. I know that the swadeshi gospel has not been understood; certainly it has not been assimilated by all the body of workers, much less by the critics.

Is it your object not to support at all even the consumption of Indian mill-made goods? We have a strike here now in which five or six thousand of the workers in one of the Indian mills have come out. Would it not be possible in accordance with your own programme to provide a percentage of them with handlooms instead of insisting upon all of them going back to the mills?

I am doing that; I have done that in the case of the Assam-Bengal strike.[1] They had struck work out of sympathy for the outraged coolies from the Assam tea plantations. The Government have not repaired the mischief which they had done and ruthlessly maltreated them. If I can prevent all the men from rejoining as on the Assam-Bengal Railway and Steamer Co.'s, I shall do so and I shall advise the Congress Committee to vote as much as they can in order to give every one of the strikers, a spinning-wheel and to give groups of them handlooms, and establish for them a colony to give them every facility. When I heard of a strike of women in mills I sent similar messages. We are trying to reduce the number of women labourers.

Do you solely object to the conditions under which the workers have to live or do you object to the introduction of Western machinery? If the conditions in all the Indian mills were improved to a certain extent, and they were given satisfactory housing and satisfactory wages, would your objection to mill production continue?

Yes, my objection will continue because it is not based on antipathy to Western machinery. Here the question of West and East does not arise. The question of West and East is ever present in my mind but in connection with the machinery as you have put it, I am against concentrating the manufacture of cloth in the hands of a few, just as I would be against concentrating the cooking of our food in hotels. Millions of people in India used to occupy themselves usefully and honourably at least eight hours per

[1] *Vide* "Speech to Railway Workers, Chittagong", 31-8-1921.

day. Today the most tragic result of the British rule has been—unintended by the British people I admit—that over 20 millions of the people of India remain in enforced idleness for six months in the year.

If further outbreaks cannot be prevented, will you abandon the non-co-operation movement as you formerly abandoned the civil disobedience campaign?[1]

I am sorry I cannot do so for the civil disobedience campaign was aimed at a particular Act. This non-co-operation movement is aimed at the whole system of Government and as it is aimed at the whole system of Government it is not possible for me to abandon it. I cannot possibly say so, because it is a big movement and there are tremendous risks to be taken, in order to do away with the greatest of them which is the continuance of this system.

In the event of Great Britain conceding Dominion Status to India, what, in your opinion, are the essential features of such a proposed settlement?

If the Dominion Status is conceded, I must state the Khilafat and the Punjab questions will have to be put out of the way.

If the whole issue of the Khilafat were referred to the arbitration of the League of Nations, would you agree to abide by the decision as both England and France have agreed in relation to the Silesian question?

I could not do so, because it would be camouflage. I know it depends upon Mr. Lloyd George[2]. Mr. Lloyd George has to go as far as the nation would let him. I do not believe that Mr. Lloyd George is deliberately mischievous. He has become entangled with the reactionary element in the British Empire.

If the dispute were referred to the League of Nations it would be entirely out of his hands.

But he would still be able to affect the deliberations of the League. I will put it in a concrete way. Is there anything to prevent the Prime Minister from withdrawing all the forces from Mesopotamia and having nothing to do with Mesopotamia? The mandate in Mesopotamia and Palestine is with the British nation. I marvel why if they are honest they are insistent upon their remaining in Mesopotamia.

Would you assent to the idea that the disputed territories should be transferred to Turkey under a mandate from the League of Nations?

[1] *Vide* Vol. XV, pp. 243-5 and 468-71.

[2] British statesman; Prime Minister of England, 1916-22

I do not mind at all, but there will arise general difficulties. What I say is that there should be absolutely Muslim control without the slightest control of the Great Powers, directly or indirectly, over all the Peninsula and there should be no interference whatsoever with Turkey. If the Arabs do not want anything to do with Turks, let them fight it out amongst themselves.

Would you be content if the British were to retain control at Basra but not over the remainder of Mesopotamia?

It cannot be done. No, let trade proceed without political interference, or control.

Failing such a settlement, do you agree with Mr. Mahomed Ali that the Congress at Ahmedabad should declare for an Independent Republic?

No, for this reason, that a mere declaration of independence would not satisfy me. It would not satisfy me to declare an Independent Republic. To do that we must be able to fight with the British Government not along the lines of violence, but non-violence. But we are not sufficiently organized. Lord Salisbury used to say when he was irritated by some questions, "It does not matter; somehow or other we have muddled through to success up to now, so the hon'ble member need not worry." We have done in the same way. I am not taking the sole credit for retaining non-violent non-co-operation. God has come to our help and assistance.

If India were to receive Dominion Home Rule, would not that be regarded as settling the issues raised by the Punjab automatically?

Yes, it would settle the issues automatically.

Then your suggestion of a settlement is that the Government of India should be made wholly responsible to the legislature?

Indian Legislature. Oh, yes; certainly.

Are you anxious to take over the whole control of the Army at once, or would you make an exception of that subject?

I think we are entirely ready to take up the whole control of the Army which means practically disbanding three-fourths of it. I would keep just enough to police India.

If the Army were reduced to that extent, do you not apprehend anything aggressive from the frontier territories?

No.

My information, derived from military sources, is that there are over half-a-million armed men on the frontier?

and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as, they had expected, among the learned ones but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a pariah home.

5. You say, machinery has been the bane of civilization. Then why do you allow yourself to travel in railway trains and motor cars?

There are certain things which you cannot escape all at once, even whilst you are avoiding them. This earthy case in which I am locked up is the bane of my life, but I am obliged to put up with it and even indulge in it as this friend knows. But does he seriously doubt that the machine age was responsible for the organized murders during the late war? Asphyxiating gas and such other abominations have not advanced us by an inch.

6. Is it a fact that formerly you travelled third-class in railway trains and now you travel in special trains and first-class carriages?

Alas! the correspondent is correctly informed. The Mahatmaship is responsible for the special trains, and the earthy case for the degradation to the second-class.

7. In what relation do you stand to Count Tolstoy?

As a devoted admirer who owes much in life to him.

8. Why do you not define swaraj? Do you not feel that you are in duty bound to define the word at least to your followers?

In the first place the word is indefinable; in the second place, if the correspondent will turn to the file of *Young India*, he will find a workable definition there. I will try another here. It means complete freedom of opinion and action without interference with another's right to equal freedom of opinion and action. Therefore it means India's complete control of sources of revenue and expenditure without interference from or with any other country.

9. What will be your own position when swaraj is obtained?

I would certainly like a prolonged and perhaps well-deserved holiday.

10. When swaraj is attained, how are the political and religious interests of Mussulmans to be safeguarded?

They will not need any safeguarding, because every Indian will be as free as every other Indian, and because there will then be mutual toleration, respect and love, and therefore mutual trust.

11. Do you honestly believe that Government will pack up and beat a hasty retreat from India on the 31st of October 1921 or at any other time within this year that you will be pleased to fix?

Nepalese. They are a splendid people. I met a little girl and I parted with her the day before yesterday. She is spreading the knowledge of non-violence among the Nepalese, because there never has the slightest attempt been made to make them peaceful.

If it is the case that the British administration has failed to keep the Moplahs non-violent, is it not the case that your movement has failed equally?

I cannot say that it has failed owing to my movement. My movement started not twelve months ago and against heavy odds, Government laughing, my own people laughing. It was most difficult for me to make them understand the word "non-co-operators". No reformer has been so hampered as I am. I know that the difficulties are all of my own making, but I had no choice. If, therefore, I say that non-violence is a matter of mere policy, they do not understand what this policy is. When dealing with the Hindu-Muslim problem, non-violence must be our final creed. If I can succeed in doing that, then of course, we shall attain our goal quickly. The British Government intervenes if a non-co-operator goes to these Moplah districts. He is prevented. It is our case that those places, where this violence has taken place, were those least touched by non-co-operators.

Don't you think that the whole of the Moplahs are under the control of the religious leaders and not of the political?

True; that is why I have brought religion into politics. I have endeavoured and endeavoured very successfully to make these religious pandits understand that they cannot exist without the political life of the country affecting them; otherwise the largest part of theirs goes out of their control. Here is a disturbance going on. I could have taken one of the Ali Brothers and quelled it in no time if the Government system had been honestly administered. If we had failed it would have cost us our lives. We would have been killed. It would have been nice for the Government and for us; but when we died, out of our ashes the spirit of non-violence would have risen.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

52. *INTERVIEW TO "MADRAS MAIL"*[1]

[*September 15, 1921*]

[REPRESENTATIVE:] You look upon the propaganda of boycott of foreign cloth as the constructive side of non-co-operation though it involves the destruction of the existing stock of foreign cloth?

[GANDHIJI:] I look upon swadeshi as the constructive side of non-co-operation, as I expect it to lead to the manufacture of all the cloth needed by the nation by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

Do you think, Mr. Gandhi, it is possible in view of the existing conditions of the country to produce sufficient to meet all the needs of the people?

Certainly, even as it is possible for us to cook our daily supply of food, if the manufacture of cloth be in our hands as it was only two or three hundred years ago.

Have not the conditions altered materially with the introduction of machinery, apart from other causes?

No disturbance has been really created by machinery, such as that it cannot be corrected. It is a mental state which has got to be put right. It is not as though hands, nor is it as if all the hours that the nation devoted to manufacturing cloth and spinning yarn, are now utilized to any other or better purpose. The hours are there unutilized and the hands as well.

You believe that the concentration of manufacture under the factory system could equally and effectively be carried out for the purpose of meeting the needs of the nation by hand-spinning on an extensive scale in the homes and cottages of the people?

Certainly.

In other words you think it is only a question of extensive manufacture through the agency of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in rural areas in the country rather than intensive manufacture under the factory system?

Most certainly so.

Do you think that all our modern requirements could be adequately and effectively answered without the use of machinery?

[1] A representative of *Madras Mail* called on Gandhiji at Ramjee Kalyanjee's residence at San Thome.

Modern requirements so far as cloth is concerned, yes, they can be; but during the transition stage the nation will have to do with a limited supply till the beautiful fabric of India is revived.

But how is it necessary, Mr. Gandhi, to destroy the existing stock in use of foreign cloth in this country to achieve this end?

Because the nation has to realize the crime that it has committed in abandoning its home industries and taking to foreign cloth, it is a necessary penance in order to demonstrate a change of heart.

Penance, Mr. Gandhi, presupposes a sincere feeling for the abandonment of the practice or ideal of the people?

Certainly.

Do you think that the people of this country have actively helped in the destruction of indigenous industries or do you not agree that in any system of competition between manual labour and machinery, indigenous industries are bound to go to the wall?

Although under diabolical pressure, nevertheless people deliberately sacrificed their own national industries when there was no question of competition.

I don't quite follow you, Mr. Gandhi.

It is historically true that when we gave up our home industries there was no competition between the handloom and the machinery.

But I thought that people had not voluntarily given up their industries, but found themselves unable to cope with the competition of machine-made goods imported into this country?

My point is that owing to the political advantages which the East India Company had obtained they were in a position to force upon the people machine-made goods.

But were not these machine-made goods at the same time cheaper than indigenous products?

Never. Over and over again the people of the country were terrorized into giving up their occupation of cloth manufacture. By such means as for instance the cutting of their own thumbs by the weavers themselves when their labour was impressed.

But could it have gone on such a scale as to effectively kill indigenous industries?

Certainly, the continuance of the process over a certain length of time was bound to have that effect unless people treated those home manufactures as a part of their religion.

Do you consider the political conditions now favourable in your opinion for a revival of indigenous industries, which you contend had been killed by the East India Company?

I consider the conditions very favourable because people realize that if hand-spinning and hand-weaving are not revived now, there is nothing but deeper and deeper starvation day after day staring the nation in the face.

It is part of your programme, then, to enforce this lesson on the masses?

Yes. It is being done on a very vast scale.

At the same time if the factory system and machine-made goods coming to India are continued, do you expect any very large success for the movement even though people, out of considerations of patriotism and economy, agree to devote their attention to hand-spinning ?

Your question supplies the answer. If people resort to these things from patriotic and economic motives then it can be done.

But does your study of our people and their present condition encourage you to think that patriotic considerations will prove such a powerful factor as to give a strong impetus to indigenous manufactures on a large scale, unaided by the State?

Yes, certainly. That is why I say that hand-spinning and hand-weaving accepted by the people on a universal scale ought to lead automatically to swaraj.

But internal disturbances of the kind in Malabar, you will agree, Mr. Gandhi, are a powerful set-back to the movement of non-violent non-co-operation?

My answer is yes.

Do you not also agree, Mr. Gandhi, that your movement has a great deal to do with this outbreak in Malabar?

All the information that I have collected, and which I have no reason to doubt, points to the fact that violence broke out in those parts which were least touched by the activities of non-co-operators and my information goes further that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from entering those disturbed parts.

Notwithstanding protests from respectable leaders not in your camp against the evil consequences of non-co-operation on a large scale, you still think that it is the only means, if not the chief means for a people situated like India to attain swaraj?

It is the only means; in no other way, can India attain swaraj for a century.

So long as there are large masses of people who do not come under your influence directly but who read of non-co-operation in the Press and hear on

platforms, do you not think that the movement is calculated to create ill-feeling against those in authority without giving them suggestions as regards ways and means to remedy the state of affairs which they are made to believe is attributable to the existing Government?

That question assumes that nobody does really preach about non-violence.

But I think you will agree, if I am not flattering you, that it wants Mr. Gandhi in every quarter where there is trouble of one kind or other believed to be consequent on the spread of the doctrine of non-co-operation?

I cannot flatter myself that it required my personal presence everywhere to bring about a tranquil atmosphere because I know there are many who have been able to bring about and retain that atmosphere. I do believe that if the Government had allowed Mr. Yakub Hassan to go to Malabar what had happened there afterwards would have been prevented and I am positive that the Government, instead of giving a change of air to Mahomed Ali at Waltair, had invited him to Malabar, he would have brought about perfect peace and many lives would have been saved and many Hindu households would have been left undisturbed by the Moplah fanatics.

But what do you think will be the effect on your movement of the arrest of Mr. Mahomed Ali? Will it conduce to make the Mohammedan section among your followers violent?

I hope not, and I believe that if India remains non-violent and yet firm, I know swaraj is within sight. Seeing that Government do not want to consult public opinion, the only alternative left open to Government is to kill out those who represent that opinion at least temporarily.

Is that what you say they are doing?

I have no doubt about it in my mind.

But so long as there are these big "IFs" underlying your ideal you will not save people for fearing that, despite the best of goodwill in the world on your part, there may be occasions for violence, when they have not your philosophic temperament or strong will to keep them under control?

There always is the danger and no reformer has yet been able to carry out his reform without large risks.

So long as there are such large risks, do you think Government is not justified in fearing such measures as in their wisdom they think necessary?

Government cannot possibly be justified seeing that the Government are opposing the just aspirations of the people.

But is that not a matter on which there is large difference of opinion among Indians themselves?

My answer is that there is no difference of opinion as to the demands of people about the Khilafat and the Punjab. I mention this because Government could not have imprisoned Maulana Mahomed Ali if the Government had any intention of satisfying Khilafat demands.

Notwithstanding the Malabar outrages, you do not despair of Hindu-Muslim unity?

I don't despair for the simple reason that no sane Muslim approves of what a few Moplahs have done. It is too much to expect when you have to deal with masses of mankind that there will be no wrong done by any single individual.

That is the very thing that is being urged against your non-co-operation?

Yes, but has the Government erased the word "risks" out of their vocabulary?

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

53. *SPEECH AT MADRAS*

September 15, 1921

A monster meeting was held last evening at 5.30 at the Beach, opposite the Presidency College to hear Mahatma Gandhi on "Swadeshi". . . .

On the motion of Mr. S. Kasturiranga Aiyangar[1], Mr. Yakub Hassan was voted to the Chair. . . .

Mahatma Gandhi, who on rising was received with an enthusiastic ovation, addressed the audience in clear and ringing tones for over an hour and was heard with great attention. The speech was in English and was translated sentence by sentence by Mr. A. Ramaswami Aiyanger[2] first and then by Mr. S. Satyamurti[3]. Mahatmaji said:

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

As usual I have to offer my apologies to you for my physical inability to speak to you standing. I would like all the audience that is at the back to preserve complete silence if they want to

[1] Congress leader of Madras who was a member of Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee; editor, *The Hindu*, Madras

[2] Editor, *Swadeshamitran*, a Tamil daily of Madras and later of *The Hindu*; General Secretary of the Congress, 1926-27; Member of Legislative Assembly

[3] 1887-1943; Congress leader from Madras and orator

follow my remarks. I would ask the whole of the audience also neither to give applause nor to cry out "shame", "shame". If you are in earnest about fulfilling the programme set before the country by the National Congress held in September at Nagpur, believe me, you will not be able to do so either by applause or by "shame", "shame". It is necessary for us to become far more serious and business-like than we have hitherto been. We have only a few months in order to fulfil our programme and to establish swaraj. We have far too little time, humanly speaking, in order to obtain redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. Happily I see signs about me every day that God is with us. And I know—I have no doubt you also know—that God can make us succeed even if we may seem, humanly speaking again, to be the weakest.

I verily believe that this arrest at Waltair of Maulana Mahomed Ali has come to us as godsend. God only knows how he tried, his brother tried and I tried to keep them out of jail by every honest, legitimate means worthy of non-co-operators. All that a brave man can do, Mahomed Ali did in order to keep himself on the straight and narrow path; and the burden rests upon the shoulders of the Viceroy to show what new situation has developed to justify the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali when he was on a mission of peace and goodwill. Ever since that celebrated and much discussed statement[1] signed by the Brothers, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been more or less with me. I am here to testify to the whole of this audience and through this audience to the whole of India that I have not found Maulana Mahomed Ali to depart by a hair's breadth from the promise that he made to India in the name of God, that he will not incite to violence. I assure you that in private and in public, in season and out of season, Maulana Mahomed Ali has emphasized the necessity for observance of complete non-violence by the people of India. He has been telling everyone who has met him and he has been assuring all the audience, numerous as they were that the only condition—indispensable condition—of success whether for swaraj or for the Khilafat wrong or for the Punjab wrong was the complete retention of non-violent spirit by the people of India. But the Ali Brothers are no cowards. And if anybody dreamt or thought that the statement meant a change in their attitude or a change in their language, they were mistaken. I have not had the privilege of meeting two braver and truer souls. I assure you that both the Brothers are transparently sincere. But I admit they are capable of and are

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX.

fond of using strong language, and calling a spade a spade. (Suppressed laughter.) They as brave men and as strong men have endeavoured and were able to pour a little bit of their own bravery and strength into their audience. But in their own incomparable manner they have also disciplined themselves to the best of their ability with the strength and bravery that they infected their followers with. It is my conviction that no two Mussulmans have tried more than they have to retain a non-violent atmosphere throughout the length and breadth of India; and the Government need not, therefore, be surprised if I charge them with having imprisoned or attempted to imprison the Khilafat with the imprisonment of Maulana Mahomed Ali.

It was open to the Government, powerful as that Government is, to invite the Ali Brothers and me to enter the disturbed area and give us an opportunity to procure calmness and peace in that disturbed land. I am sure that much innocent blood would have been spared. I am sure that the desolation of many a Hindu household would have also been spared. But I must be forgiven if again I charge the Government with a desire to incite the populace to violence. They have no room in this system of government under which we are governed, for strong, brave and true men. The only place they have for such men is their prison.

My heart goes out to those men who have been so much afflicted in Malabar. I am aware that our Moplah brethren, undisciplined as they have been all these long long years, have gone mad. I am aware that they have committed a sin against the Khilafat and against their own country. The whole of India today is under an obligation to remain non-violent even under the gravest provocation. The desolation of the Hindu households shows clearly to me that the message, the healing message, of non-violent non-co-operation had not penetrated Moplah households in that area. And I have evidence which I have no reason to doubt, that those parts in which our Moplah countrymen went mad were not touched by the spirit of non-co-operation. I am aware that non-co-operators were deliberately prevented from going to those parts by the authorities. But I hope that my Hindu countrymen will keep their senses. Even assuming, as I am not prepared to assume, that all the stories that have come to us through Government circles of forced conversions are true, you, the Hindu part of this audience, will believe with me that that ought not to put such a strain upon our loyalty to the creed of Hindu-Muslim unity as to break it. We must not expect all of a sudden every Hindu and every Mussulman to become absolutely faithful

to this creed. I do not know a single sensible Mussulman who approves either secretly or openly of these forcible conversions, nor need we Hindus be disturbed about the future of these brethren of ours.

My reading of our Shastras convinces me that a man who is forced to do anything against his will needs no *prayaschitta*[1]. Our friend Mr. Yakub Hassan has told the Tamil land that these men who are supposed to have been forcibly converted are inadmissible in the faith of Islam. As a devout Hindu knowing what he is speaking, I assure you that not one of those Hindus has forfeited his right to remain in the Hindu fold. I understand that the Government is placing every obstacle in the way of the Congress and the Khilafat workers taking relief to those desolate homes and I am told that at the same time the Government itself is taking no pains to provide relief to these poor people who are supposed to be starving. Whether they give us permission or do not, I have no doubt that it is our clear duty to collect as much funds as we can for the relief of these sufferers and see to it that they get what they require. The Congress Committee has already voted a certain sum of money and I know that the Khilafat Committee also is endeavouring to vote a certain sum of money for the relief of these sufferers. But I suggest to the Mussulman countrymen in the Madras Presidency that it will be a graceful act on their part if they were to collect even pies from every home for the relief of their Hindu brethren.

I know today that this Presidency is perhaps the most afflicted throughout India. We do not yet know fully what measures the Government are taking in order to repress the strong and the rising forces of the people in this land. I have no reason to disbelieve the testimony that has been given to me this morning that many young men quartered in Malabar have been insulted because they have had the audacity to wear khaddar caps and khaddar vests. I understand that these keepers of the peace in India have torn the pure vests of khaddar and burnt them to ashes. I understand the authorities in Malabar have invented new methods of humiliation, if they have not gone one better than the authorities in the Punjab.

The "Reform" ministers have shown their teeth in the Andhra country. They have imposed upon an unwilling populace a municipality. In the teeth of universal opposition in another part of the Andhra country, they have been endeavouring forcibly to collect

[1] Atonement

a grazing tax. And I understand that under a *fatwa*[1] from these ministers innocent cows have been torn from their calves and consigned to the pounds, where they have not even grass and water to eat and drink. What are we to do in the face of these repressive measures, not only at the hands of English administrators, but also at the hands of the so-called responsible ministers? Are we to answer to these repressions with violence? The result in that case, we know, is certain. We know that the result of any violence done by the people who are under an oath not to do violence, is certain destruction. If you want to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali, if you want to secure the release of those innocent cows, if you want to avoid the repetition of the humiliations that are being imposed upon our countrymen in Malabar, in the name of law, order and peace, if you want to resist the pressure that is being put upon our gallant countrymen in Chirala and Perala, the only remedy before you is complete observance of non-violence. The self-respect of the nation demands that the only way to secure the release of Maulana Mahomed Ali and all those who may be unlawfully imprisoned by this Government is to establish swaraj and for the first parliament of swaraj to pass the first measure of discharge of these innocent prisoners with becoming honours. We must ask for no quarter from this Government; and we must expect none. We must challenge the Government to do its worst and before it yields to the expressed will of a determined people, we must expect that Government to take up the challenge and answer it in the only manner in which a tyrannical and insolent Government can answer.

But I want you to turn the searchlight inward. What shall we do then to attain swaraj during this very year? I can present my countrymen with no other programme but the well-tried programme of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. Our non-violence and our attachment to Hindu-Muslim unity must be expressed through swadeshi. It grieves me to find, therefore, in this audience so very few people expressing the swadeshi spirit on their own persons; and when I see Begum Mahomed Ali Sahiba and when I see my sisters in front of me, my heart breaks. Begum Sahiba is as gently brought up as those sisters of mine. But she is not ashamed, on the contrary, she takes pride in wearing heavy khaddar. And if you, my dear sisters, have followed the trend of my remarks, I hope that you will change your heart tomorrow, and throw away your foreign silks and foreign fineries and dress

[1] Decree of a Muslim divine

yourselves in pure holy khaddar. When I think of Maulana Mahomed Ali and still more of his bigger and bulkier brother, Maulana Shaukat Ali, all dressed and drenched in their khaddar costumes, and when I cast my glance over this vast audience, my heart breaks again. You cannot get swaraj with a spirit such as is exhibited here. The country expects you to give up your foreign and fine clothing, your caps made of foreign cloth and your dhotis made out of the fine foreign yarn. The country expects every man, woman and child to spin away for all the time that he or she can find at his or her disposal. Not until the message, the peaceful and sacred message of the spinning-wheel has penetrated almost every home of India is swaraj attainable by non-violent methods.

At this stage an interval of ten minutes was allowed for Mohammedans to offer their evening prayer. Meanwhile silence was strictly observed at the meeting. After the *namaz* Mahatmaji, continuing, said :

The spinning-wheel to me is a sign of our reviving prosperity and a significance of self-confidence. The spinning-wheel is a sure test of our assimilation of the spirit of non-violence. The spinning-wheel is the common bond that will tie not only Mussulmans and Hindus but all the other people professing other religions and who are domiciled in India. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of the chastity of the womanhood of India. In the absence of the spinning-wheel I give you my testimony that thousands of our poor sisters are giving themselves to a life of shame and degradation. The spinning-wheel is the widow's companion. And it was the spinning-wheel which supplemented the slender resources of the millions of the peasantry of India. It is the spinning-wheel which has purified many a man before now; and the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel in our homes means to me a complete demonstration of the fact that we have ceased to consider that the head is the only thing we need care for. The spinning-wheel is therefore a demonstration to me that those who spin the wheel realize the supreme dignity of labour. The spinning-wheel is the solace of the untouchable whom we have hitherto so sinfully despised. The spinning-wheel is the honourable substitute that can be presented to our fallen sisters throughout the length and breadth of our land, and it is only when the spinning-wheel has found a sure and established footing in our homes that it is possible for India to embark upon mass civil disobedience. Not whilst our blood is hot with rage, not whilst we are in a state of excitement can disobedience be proclaimed in the land which can, by any stretch of imagination, be called civil. If we want to spread throughout

the length and breadth of India the spirit of non-violence in order that we can work out our salvation during the year, there is no other weapon but the spinning-wheel which can purify us. It is not the mills of Bombay nor the mills of Ahmedabad which should clothe you, but you should have ability and you should have self-respect enough to insist upon clothing yourselves by your own sacred hands. But I hope no one in this audience will use my remarks as a cover for his weakness and for his continuing in the foreign dress in which I see the audience. On the contrary, if you feel as I do that we are in honour bound to fulfil our sacred resolution come to during last December, you will see to it that you go about the streets of Madras with only a *langoti*[1] on you until you have clothed yourselves by the sweat of your brow. The Ali Brothers want no hartal from you. They want no demonstrations by means of mass meetings from you. But they want from you an expression of your fixed determination of valour, of courage, of fearlessness, of truthfulness and of non-violence. They certainly expect the school boys who have flocked to their audience to respond, if they have any shred of feeling and regard for them, to cease to go to the schools of the Government whose system they are resolved upon destroying. They expect weak title-holders, weak councillors, weak lawyers who believe in the message of non-co-operation and yet have not the courage to give up what they have. They expect all these classes now to respond and respond in a brave manner.

But whether these select classes recognize their duty or not or whether, recognizing their duty, they can rise to the occasion or not, there is no reason for anyone of us here to reject the message of swadeshi. We want swaraj not merely for classes but we want it for masses including the untouchables and the weakest men and women in the land. Ours, thank God, is an army in which men, women and children, the leper and the diseased, all have the same honourable place side by side with the privileged. For, do we not claim and do we not say from a thousand platforms that the present Government is a kingdom of Satan and do we not claim that we seek to substitute the kingdom of Satan by the kingdom of God? And has not the lowest of us an equal place with the highest in the kingdom of God? I have so often said on this sacred Beach, in the presence of the rolling waves and in the name of God, that I have an abiding belief in the religious instincts of the Tamilian and the Telugu people with whom I have had the privilege

[1] Loin-cloth

of eating, drinking, sleeping and suffering in South Africa. I am hoping and praying that the future historian will not have to testify that, whereas the people of Dravida land talked of the name of the kingdom of God with their lips, they were following the ways of the kingdom of Satan. Let us not justify the charge levelled against us by our opponents, that under cover of non-violence and truth we are violent and untruthful on many an occasion. Swaraj, as Tilak Maharaj has said, is our sacred birthright, Khilafat is a sacred treasure with our Mussulman countrymen; redress of the Punjab wrongs is a sacred trust. Let us not betray our birthright, our religion and our trust by proving false to a creed to which we subscribed twice over last year. We have set before ourselves a standard and we must abide by that standard and prove true to it. Let us not, by proving untrue to our creed, deserve the curse of our future generation.

The next few months must be to us times of turmoil, troubles, imprisonments and many other things. All the world over darkness is the deepest before dawn and I want you with the eye of faith to see the rays of dawn coming out through this deep darkness that has overshadowed the land. And I ask the men and women of this great Presidency to discharge their trust in such an honourable manner that the future generations may be able to say that the Madras Presidency was in no way behind other presidencies in doing its duty. I pray to God that He may give us all strength and courage and a fixed purpose to enable us to reach our goal.

You will give Begum Sahiba, who will speak to you a few words, a most respectful and attentive hearing. She will be followed by Maulana Azad Sobhani, and he is a great Muslim divine. When non-co-operation was finally decided upon by the Central Khilafat Committee long before September last, he was the representative chosen by the Central Khilafat Committee to expound the doctrine of the Khilafat. I am therefore sure that you will give him the same patient hearing that you have been kind enough to give me. Finally, I would urge you to remain undemonstrative not only at this meeting but at all of our meetings. Non-violent discipline demands that we do not unnecessarily heat our blood by useless demonstration, noise or signs. I say this from my wide experience that it is not possible to observe always peace when all people are talking and making noises even though they may be of affection. In spite of our knowledge of what our opponents are doing, of what our countrymen who are opposing us are doing, I would urge you to observe a respectful and forbearing

attitude even towards them. Gentleness and love, I assure you, will win us many an opponent who has hitherto given us battle. As we progress, we will have many an occasion to be incensed by writings, speeches and acts of our opponents. I would urge you not to return their evil, if we believe it to be evil, with our evil. They are bound by no creed of non-violence as you and I are and we need not be surprised nor angry for anything that they may do. Let us take care of ourselves and the future is assured. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great attention that you have paid to the remarks that I have made before you.

The Hindu, 16-9-1921

54. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

Under the auspices of the Sarvajanik Mitra Mandal, Mahatma Gandhi addressed a ladies meeting in Soundarya Mahal at 4.45 p.m. on Friday last. . . .

Mahatmaji . . . addressed the meeting in Gujarati . . . and impressed upon the audience the desirability and necessity of using swadeshi clothes. He felt sorry to see that the ladies present were all dressed in foreign clothes. He said that if they were offered *rotis* prepared in Japan and England they will unhesitatingly refuse to consume them however delicious they may be. In the same way they must make it a religious point not to use foreign clothes and fineries at all because they are the source of the national degradation. He advised the ladies to burn their foreign clothes and to make resolute determination to use only the hand-woven swadeshi clothes which must be prepared by their own hands. He then dwelt upon the utility of the charkha and said that it is the life-support of a widow, a companion of any forlorn woman and now it must be a dear friend of every self-respecting Indian lady. Charkha is a mechanism which does not require any great strength or skill to use it. Even a poor weak boy can work at it.

Introducing Mrs. Mahomed Ali, Gandhiji said, that the ladies should follow the example of Begum Sahiba. Her husband has been recently arrested by the Government but she did not show the least sign of fear or nervousness. She is dressed in khaddar although she has to wear heavier clothes than any of you will have to do. He said that the ladies have a fancy for fineries but they must always bear in mind that beauty does not lie in anything outward. If a woman is good and dutiful she is beautiful, otherwise she is ugly. Exhorting the audience Gandhiji said that if they have any sense of self-respect and if they want to keep honour of their children and the nation at large, then they must give up their liking for pomp and show and lead a simple, rigorous

life. Sitaji, when she was a captive in the Ashokavatika was offered all sorts of fine things by Ravana but she indignantly refused to use any of them, she preferred to live on fruits and cover her body with the bark of the trees. So, as long as India is in the chains of slavery and dharma raj is not established, every man and woman of India must look down upon the foreign clothes as something really untouchable.

In the end he advised the northern ladies to mix freely with their Madrasi sisters and said that they must bring up their children properly. They must infuse bravery, courage in them.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

55. SPEECH AT PIECE-GOODS MERCHANTS' MEETING, MADRAS

September 16, 1921

An important general body meeting of the Madras Piece-Goods Merchants' Association was held last evening in the Association premises to discuss the question of boycott of foreign cloth with Mahatma Gandhi. The meeting was largely attended by the members of the Association. Maulana Azad Sobhani, Messrs Yakub Hassan, C. Rajagopalachari and T. S. S. Rajan were also present at the meeting. The speeches were in English and were translated by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari.

Mr. Ramjee Kalyanjee on behalf of the Association welcomed Mahatmaji. . . . Mahatma Gandhi in reply said :

GENTLEMEN,

It gives me the greatest pleasure really to meet you here this afternoon. It has been my good fortune to enjoy the sweetest of relations with the piece-goods merchants. As you know I had several meetings with them in Bombay and in Calcutta, and throughout my travels in the different parts of India I have taken good care to see the merchant community. You will be glad to learn from me that in all these places they have been in full sympathy, as they ought to have been with this great swadeshi movement, and you will be glad to learn also that with the exception of Calcutta the merchants by a very large majority have agreed to stop importing any further foreign cloth. The Calcutta merchants, I know, have found some difficulties. They suggested that they would stop imports only up to 31st December and should reserve to themselves the liberty for exchanging and selling foreign yarns amongst them with their existing stocks. I was unable to accept that proposition, because I felt that was nothing but camouflage.

And I would have been an unwilling instrument for entering into secret bargains. In a movement of this character which we claim to be pure and religious, there is really no room for secrecy or for under-hand dealings. It is much better that those who cannot see their way to stop importing foreign cloth should say so frankly and openly and continue their trade than that they should say one thing in the public and do quite the opposite in private. But of course I sympathize with our Calcutta merchant friends, in that they are the largest importers of foreign cloth throughout India. But you will be glad to hear that even they are now taking a more patriotic attitude than they have taken hitherto. Mr. Jamnalalji who specially remained in Calcutta in order to carry on negotiations with those big houses telegraphed to me today saying that several of them had now shown reasonableness and national interest in the subject. So you see that the whole of India really is rallying to the swadeshi flag. And therefore I was delighted to find assurances of your sympathy with this movement; and if you can only abide by the undertaking you have given in your statement, viz., that you will not import hereafter foreign cloth, it will largely answer the purpose which we want to fulfil. I know that we have throughout India today, probably 40 crores worth of piece-goods for sale. I do not see much difficulty in 40 crores worth of foreign cloth even disappearing in India amongst the multitude. But I must totally dissent from the view that the stock that you have at present is not capable of being sent out of India altogether. As you know there is a large quantity of piece-goods imported into India for re-export. I know that there are certain styles which are not salable with any degree of profit outside India. But surely there is still a large quantity of stock which is just as salable outside India as inside it. And I would ask you to tax yourselves and see whether you cannot get rid of some at least of your foreign stock outside India. I see, for instance, no difficulty whatsoever in sending out of India all the foreign yarn that you might have. But if you will take with me a broad and national view of our own position I have still one more suggestion to make. But I know that before you can realize the suggestion by execution you must also have the same faith that I have. If all the merchants throughout India were to be true to the country and were to give their best energies and their splendid ability to the attainment of swaraj . . . if you share the belief with me that swaraj is attainable during the very year, and if you intend upon working it up then, like sensible men that you are, you may even hold your stock in reserve to be disposed of by the State through its first parlia-

ment; any such decision on your part cannot but redound to your credit and cannot but be a credit to the country immensely. But I know that this is a counsel of perfection. At the same time other countries have in action transformed many more things. I know what happened in South Africa when the great war with the English was going on. The South African Dutch are a brave and a godfearing people; and having an immutable faith in the destiny of their own country, they counted no cost to be too heavy to pay in order to retain their country's freedom. But as I say, if you cannot have patience and if you have not the faith that we can attain swaraj during this very year, then, as I say, you will cease to import any foreign cloth either directly or indirectly and cease to enter into bargains amongst yourselves. That would entirely satisfy the present requirements. I want to put before you a few mathematical problems. Today our importers are really nothing more than commission agents. You get perhaps Rs. 5 out of every hundred rupees worth of cloth. But Rs. 95 entirely goes out to your principals. Now, imagine that you are the manufacturers of the cloth that we need in India itself. Then the whole of the hundred rupees would remain in India; and see that we shall still want almost all the cloth that we have been hitherto importing from outside. Who is going to trade with 60 crores of rupees per year? I need not tell you that you are the people. You are strong. You know the value of figures. You know your own country's need. Then is it any impossible proposition that I place before you when I suggest that you should take charge of the whole of the swadeshi movement? Does it require any very extraordinary bravery on your part to dot the country with your own agents or *gumastas*? You will simply spread charkhas and handlooms, taking and collecting yarn from all those thousands and thousands of India, stocking, selling and converting the yarn into cloth for India. It is really your privilege and your duty to organize hand-spinning and hand-weaving throughout the length and breadth of the land. I would therefore ask you, not to feel despondent altogether as to the future of the country, and what the future of the imports of India will be when foreign cloth is entirely boycotted. I assure you that the future of India under swaraj is the brightest possible. I have no shadow of doubt that in a very short time many people in India would be laughing [at themselves] that they did not see the beauty of such a simple thing and that it had not occurred long ago that they should be undertaking this business. I would like you to cross-examine me even as your friends in Bombay, Calcutta and elsewhere have

done. Nothing tends to elucidate difficulties more than hearty discussions. I thank you for gathering here and inviting us to address you this afternoon.

Afterwards a general discussion ensued . . . Mahatma Gandhi in replying to each of the merchants agreed that the initiative should come from the consumers and said that there was not the slightest suggestion in his remarks that they should repudiate the contracts made, and, as it was incumbent upon them in the cause of the motherland to co-operate with the whole of India in making the swadeshi programme a success, wished they should cease to give any further orders. If they were able to alter the taste of the people as he expected they would surely be, the people would certainly go to them; and nobody had got a greater opportunity of doing substantial propaganda work than they, the piece-goods merchants had. He deprecated the credit system obtaining among the merchants as fatal to their commerce and commercial morality, and it should therefore never be regarded an impassable barrier to undertaking to stop future orders. Swaraj was sure to come and with it new economic laws would come to prevail. With regard to the suggestion that boycott should be gradual, Mahatmaji said that they had sufficient notice of it as early as one year back and an honest merchant would never find cause to complain of financial difficulties, consequent on the giving up of the credit system. This, Mahatmaji illustrated by referring to the case of Mr. Mohamed Kachalia in South Africa who orginally carried on business on credit on a large scale and when his European customers out of political motives pressed him to clear off their dues, he boldly sold away all his property and paid his creditors to the last pie and then started business with no credit and rose to such a prosperous condition that those very European merchants were tempted to offer him their goods on credit again. That was an example which they would do well to follow and a braver merchant they could not find. Personal difficulties, no doubt he appreciated, but swaraj meant sacrifice, and even a merchant was called upon to take an unselfish view of his calling. Now that *Deepavali* was approaching they should not pin their faith to any combinations of colours and fancies in cloth and they would find that the people had altered their faith so that *Deepavali* would mean greater self-denial and greater sacrifice. . . .

The Hindu, 17-9-1921

56. *SPEECH TO LABOURERS, MADRAS*

September 16, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi addressed a large gathering of labourers (now on strike) at the Beach opposite the High Court at 6.45 p.m. Among others present were Messrs Yakub Hassan, A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, S. Satyamurti, Salla Guruswami Chetty, S. Srinivasa Aiyangar, Safi Mohamed, Kasturiranga Aiyangar, Venkatarangam Naidu and M. K. Acharya. Mahatma Gandhi spoke for more than 45 minutes in English and the speech was translated into Tamil by Mr. M. S. Subramaniya Aiyar of *Swadeshamitran*. He said :

FRIENDS,

I was not able to be here punctually at 6.30. I have been talking to our merchant friends and they occupied me longer than I thought I would have to be. I well remember the scene that presented itself to me last time when I had the pleasure of meeting you. A fellow-labourer myself, my heart has always gone out to the labourers of Madras in their sorrows and their troubles. I want to come to the subject of this evening without any further ceremony.

I know that about ten thousands of you have struck work. It grieves me to find that you have trouble amongst yourselves. It grieves me to find that you are divided into two parties. It grieves me further to find that the two parties represent not two different views but two different castes. I understand that the *Adi Dravidas*, our *Panchama*[1] friends, are ranged on one side and you, the others, on the opposite side. I understand further that these *Panchama* brethren have resumed work, whereas you, a large majority have not done so. And I understand further that there has been some pressure exerted by some of you on those brethren of ours, who have rejoined work. I understand further there are continuous quarrels and squabbles between these two parties. I am therefore here to warn the majority against using the slightest pressure against the minority. As one knowing the labourers for a period of 25 years, very nearly 30 years, as one experienced in handling large strikes even affecting more than 50,000 people at a time, I know that nothing is so demoralizing to labourers than that they should use force against a single one of their brethren. The lowest one of us, the fewest of us must have the right of ex-

[1] Literally, belonging to the fifth caste; an outcaste

ercising his own free choice even though you may consider that he has erred. Therefore I would urge you to leave those 3,000 brethren of ours severely alone. I would urge you not to think low of them. I would urge you even to be kind to them. Certainly you will never swear at them. I would ask you not even to go to them to wean them from their service. Believe me when they find that you exercise no pressure against them, when they find that you have not a trace of ill will against them, they will of their own free choice and accord come to you. Nor will you consider that they are low caste and you are high caste.

All those who are Hindus I warn them, beware of thinking that there is high caste and low caste in Hinduism. Caste there undoubtedly is in Hinduism, but caste has been created for giving us a sense of duty, not of privileges and rights. Each caste is born to serve mankind. The Brahmin serves with his knowledge, a Kshatriya serves with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commerce, and a Sudra with his hands and feet. But believe me all are equal in the sight of God and he is the greatest who serves best. There is no such thing as a fifth caste in Hinduism. Untouchability is a sin against God and humanity. It is a blot on Hinduism. I urge you, fellow-labourers, to dispense from your minds the idea that the *Panchama* brethren are untouchable or lower than anyone else. If we had not treated them with contempt, if we had not maltreated them even as we claim we were ill-treated in Jallianwala Bagh, there would have been no difficulty about the attainment of swaraj. Believe me that this unhappy land will never return to happiness, unless Hindus with a supreme effort have got rid of this curse of untouchability. Therefore considering the whole question from every point of view I advise you strongly not to interfere with our *Panchama* brethren in anything they may do.

Your course in my opinion is absolutely clear and straight. It is your right and privilege to demand that if the company wishes to re-employ you, the company has to take all of you or none. It is your right to be advised by whomsoever you may choose and the company cannot dictate to you that you may not be advised by outsiders. You must insist upon your inherent right of selecting any Chairman or President you like of your Union whether out of your own ranks or anybody else. You have a right consistently with the condition of affairs in the country to determine for yourselves the terms on which you will rejoin service. You have a right to demand such wages as will enable you to sustain life, to educate your children and live as decent human beings. You are entitled to the same fresh water

and fresh air as your employers. You are entitled to insist upon having leisure and recreation from day to day. But you have also corresponding duties to perform. You must render diligent and faithful service to your employers. You have to look after the property of your employers as if it was your own. You must not seduce a single one of the employees from service. You may not absent yourselves without permission. These simple rights and duties once being understood must always be inisted upon and fulfilled as the case may be.

The next question therefore that arises is what are you to do if the employers will not employ you on your own terms. After having respectfully tendered your submission to your employers you should no more think about that submission. But you must set about working for your own livelihood. I have therefore suggested to the mill-hands of Ahmedabad and the railway employees on the Assam-Bengal Railway and the employees of the River Steam Navigation Company that they should always have a supplementary occupation to fall back upon, and the only occupation that thousands upon thousands of our countrymen can usefully occupy themselves in is hand-spinning, carding and weaving. All these three things are as easy as they are universal. I assure you and I ask you to accept the assurance of an experienced spinner and weaver. If you will diligently work at this occupation for not less than 8 hours a day, you will, each one of you, earn as much as Re. 1 per day. As a spinner you will earn perhaps As. 3 per day but as an accomplished weaver you can command a wage of Re. 1 per day. Your wives, your sisters, your mothers, your little children of 7 or 8 years can all lend a helping hand to you in earning your livelihood in this fashion. The more there are of you, the more you earn. The question therefore for those who have got large families is solved automatically and when you have learnt the dignity of your state and when you have also understood you have an occupation to fall back upon, you will not be violent either against your employers or against those who choose to seek employment under them. If you will but follow my advice you will find that you will not only become self-reliant, but the relation between yourselves and your employers will be of the healthiest character. When every labourer, man or woman, in the land thinks of swaraj and self-purification, let me assure you that if you accept my advice you will accelerate the day of swaraj. If you are Mussulmans you will soon find that you are not only supporting yourselves honourably, but you are discharging your obligations to Islam in the most faithful manner.

I know that in the beginning stages even if you accept my advice you will require a little capital to start with, but I have not a shadow of doubt that everyone of you who is an honest worker will have no difficulty in getting a handloom, a spinning-wheel or a carding bow. Whether you accept this or not, please remember that any violence, any disturbance, committed by you will recoil with redoubled force upon your own heads. You will forefeit all public sympathy and every man's hand will be against you. Therefore you will make up your minds not to go near the mills, not to seek collision with your *Panchama* brethren; but you will be engaged in quietly organizing yourselves for work. Labour has no occasion to go a-begging.

One word more and I have finished. I would like you all, you and your wives and your children, to take your share in the great national movement that is sweeping across the length and breadth of the land. The things that the country demands of us are capable of being done by every one of us. I would like you to swear before God that we shall not resort to violence for the freedom of our country or for settling quarrels between Hindus and Mussulmans, to resolve that God is our witness, that in spite of the madness shown by some of our Moplah countrymen we Hindus and Mussulmans shall remain united for ever, and to take a solemn vow that henceforth we shall never wear foreign cloth or use it for any domestic purpose and that we shall wear only such cloth as is made out of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven. Saying that we claim to fight the battle of religion we will not defile our bodies by touching wine or women. We shall not gamble, we shall not steal, nor shall we deceive any people. I make bold to say that if you, the ten thousand labourers of the Madras mills, will make this solemn resolution and abide by it, you will find at the end of the chapter that you will have contributed not a little to the attainment of swaraj and to the solution of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems. May God bless you with the wisdom and courage that are required today of every Indian. You heard yesterday from my lips, if you were at all present on the Beach, that Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested at Waltair. He was arrested and will be imprisoned for your sake and my sake. You and I know him to be an honest Mussulman and a brave Indian. You and I know him to be lover of his religion and his country. He and his brother have suffered already for their country and for their religion, and our honour and our affection for these brothers demand from us not violence, not anger but a fixed determination to carry our programme to success. They want no hartal, nor

madness from us. But they expect us to remain united and to carry out boycott of foreign cloth even though every one of us may have to be satisfied with a loin-cloth. They expect us by fearlessly turning our faces godward to establish swaraj within this very year and release them under the first resolution of the swaraj parliament.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me. Maulana Azad Sobhani Saheb who, as some of you at least know, is a great Mussulman divine, will now say a few words to you to which I am sure you will give respectful attention.

. . .

At the close of the meeting a big bonfire was made of foreign clothes of all kinds . . .

The Hindu, 17-9-1921

57. *SPEECH AT CUDDALORE*[1]

September 17, 1921

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses presented this evening, and also for the Tilak Swaraj Fund purse. I thank you too for the purse presented by Muslim friends for Smyrna Relief Fund. I know that you would have been better pleased if Maulana Mahomed Ali had been present to receive the purse. But if we do not have in our midst Mahomed Ali, we have Maulana Azad, a divine in his place. And if the Muslims are so minded to learn all about the Khilafat and the Koran they have a safe guide and friend in Maulana Azad.

Surely, if we are to attain swaraj this year, and to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year, we should follow non-violent non-co-operation without causing the slightest confusion. Love that expresses itself in confusion is blind love. And what to-day India requires most is enlightened love. And enlightened love translates itself not in vocal demonstrations but real, substantial actions. The honour of every Indian demands that we should not rest quiet for a single minute until Maulana Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali are released from prison by our own efforts. Their discharge will be a proper discharge from prison if and were it to

[1] On Gidlam grounds, S. Srinivasa Iyengar presiding; the address in English was translated into Tamil by M. K. Acharya.

be by the reason of our having attained swaraj. And swaraj if it means nothing else, undoubtedly means discipline. I hope therefore that leaders of this place will see to it that they give practical demonstrations to the citizens in conducting meetings in discipline, so that orders are obeyed implicitly. For, we have understood, the Congress in two successive sessions has shown us the way to attain swaraj. And that is the way of non-violence. And we shall not succeed till we practise non-violence with full knowledge. I hope therefore that the people of Cuddalore District will have preliminary lessons by propaganda and practice. There is no doubt that we are at the present moment in an excited state. On the one hand repression by the Sircar irritates us, on the other, hope of something good in future throws us off our balance. It is just the state that predisposes to violence. And any violence on the part of the non-co-operators certainly blocks the way to swaraj.

And in my humble opinion the spinning-wheel is the greatest steadying force amidst us. Just think what splendid results you could have shown if you had been devoting all your time to spinning for the sake of the nation in the name of God instead of waiting for me so long a time. It is high time that we unlearn the habit of listening to speeches and an idle curiosity to have a look at the leaders. And I assure you that I would have declined to go over here on account of ceaseless travelling if it was not for the assurance given that it would lead to complete establishment of swadeshi. I see that most of the sisters present, and the men of the audience have something or other of *videshi*[1] cloth on their person. But let me hope that you will come to an unalterable decision to throw off the foreign cloth on your person and in your boxes. And you will see to it that a spinning-wheel finds a place in every home and manufacture your cloth instead of getting it from either Manchester and Japan or even Bombay and Ahmedabad.

The third condition of success is Hindu-Muslim unity. But I am satisfied from all my observations that if the spinning-wheel finds a place in the home it will create unity. We call our movement a movement of self-purification. And I was therefore glad to understand from Dr. Rajan[2] that the movement of temperance has made a considerable headway in this Province. I hope that you will drive away the curse of drink from your midst in its entirety.

[1] Foreign

[2] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, who was present at the meeting

One word to my Hindu countrymen and women. Probably the curse of untouchability does not inflict any other part of India as this Presidency. It is in this land of religious devotion and worship that this shadow defiles you. It is in this sacred land that the untouchable is treated worse than what we complain of at the hands of our rulers. Swaraj is a meaningless term if we disenfranchised permanently one-sixth of the population of India. Speaking as a *sanatani*[1] Hindu, as I claim to be, there is not the slightest authority for untouchability in our Shastras. And it grieves me to think of that in a land where Shankara and Ramanuja were born and preached. I repeat the declaration I have made from many a platform that unless we remove such a blot there is no swaraj for India. Believing as I do in the law of karma, it is the fittest retribution that God has given us for making one-sixth of the people as Pariahs, thereby making ourselves Pariahs of the world. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and all the great religions of the world are in the melting-pot today. And believe me, if we cannot get rid of it, Hinduism will be at the bottom of the list. I hope therefore that you and especially leaders of public opinion and sisters will hear my remarks and will give due consideration to the Congress resolution regarding untouchability. I thank you for the patience you have shown in listening to me and I hope you will give a respectful hearing to the words of my friend Maulana Azad who will speak in Hindustani. . . .

Later there was a bonfire and *videshi* clothes worth Rs. 1,000 or so were burnt amidst deafening cries of *Mahatma ki jai, Vandemataram* and *Allah-o-Akbar.* The Mahatma left the place for Porto Novo *en route* to Kumbakonam.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

58. CIRCULAR LETTER

[After *September 17, 1921*][1]

DEAR FRIEND,

In view of the arrest of Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali and others, it is necessary for some of us to meet and consider the situation. The Working Committee meets at Ahmedabad on the 6th October. But it would be well if we could meet at Bombay on the 4th October at Laburnum Road at 1 p.m. sharp. Will you please let me know at Bombay whether you would attend? I reach Bombay on the 2nd October.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

From your province I have only invited you and . . . You will please bring any other friend whose presence may be helpful.

Madras	Yakoob Hussain
United Provinces	Khwaja
Bom[bay]	Mrs. Naidu
United Provinces	Maulana Abdul Bari
Behar	Abul Kalam Azad
Punjab	Stokes
Bengal	Das
Central Provinces	Jamnalalji
Punjab	Lalaji
Delhi	Hakimji
,,	Dr. Ansari
Sind	Jairamdas
Madras	Rajagopalachari
,,	Kasturi
United Provinces	Jawaharlal
Andhra	Venkatappayya
Maharashtra	Kelkar
Karnatak	Gangadharrao
Gujarat	Vallabhbhai
Gujarat	Vithalbhai
Behar	Rajendra

[1] Shaukat Ali's arrest mentioned in the letter was on September 17 at Bombay. *Vide* "Speech at Trichinopoly", 19-9-1921.

United Provinces	Hasrat
Andhra	T. Prakasam

From a photostat: S.N. 7628

59. *BITTER EXPERIENCES IN CALCUTTA*

I have given some description of my tour in East Bengal. There the people assembled in their thousands and yet they did not tire me. In Calcutta, however, I am completely exhausted. For one thing, I could not go to sleep till midnight and, for another, there were loud shouts of victory. It is too much for me. I get exhausted hearing them the whole day. My ears cannot endure them and, as they mean nothing, I find them painful. I am quite clear in my mind that this shouting does not help us. When people had no spirit in them, when they were afraid even to express their views, I suppose the shouting gave them some confidence in themselves. This was my experience in Champaran. Hundreds of people used to come and sit round me just in order to feel such confidence. Although their love made me feel impatient, I bore with them. Here, too, I get the same love. Shouts of victory are an indication of unthinking adoration, which profits neither the people nor me.

I have here considered this shouting from my own point of view. Touching of my feet in reverence is equally painful. I sometimes get hurt. Sometimes I barely save myself from a fall. I shiver in fear when setting out for meetings.

I see a danger in these shouts. Let us imagine that a crowd of love-crazy people has been shouting; while they are engaged in this, people hear nothing with their ears and see nothing with their eyes. Let us imagine, further, that somebody starts trouble and two or three men hit out with sticks. I see all this and I tell them with gestures and words to stop fighting. But who will listen to this frail reed-pipe? Meanwhile, let us imagine, the fighting spreads, people take sides and there is bloodshed. All this can happen without anybody wanting it. I believe this is what happened in Amritsar[1]. I do not believe that anybody had planned to kill the innocent bank manager. But the people's blood was boiling and some wicked persons took advantage of that situation.

I feel, therefore, that this non-violent struggle of ours has no room for any shouts of victory, or, if at all, only for those uttered

[1] In April 1919

in the right manner, at the right time and repeated the fewest times.

It would appear that volunteers in Calcutta have not been trained to keep order at meetings, for I have noted that, if the people are instructed beforehand, they generally obey the directions. Expression of love cannot be forced on anyone. If it is explained to the people that remaining quiet is also a sign of love or respect, they will immediately understand the idea. I tried this experiment in two meetings. My feet got crushed as I was passing through the mass of people and I was irritated by the slogan-shouting. At one place, it took me twenty minutes to reach the rostrum. At both these places I devoted one-fourth of my speech to the need for remaining quiet at meetings, preserving peace and making room for the leaders to pass. The result, at both the places, was that on our leaving the meeting they made way for us, there was no slogan-shouting and the people did not get up till we had left and so, while earlier it had taken twenty minutes to make our way through the crowd, it took only one minute while leaving.

From this experience, I judge that, if the people are given instructions in advance, they will certainly understand them and act accordingly. It is my belief that by and large the people realize the need for preserving peace and are eager to do so.

Now let us suppose the converse of all this. Imagine for a while that the people are all quietly seated. Everybody's eyes and attention are turned to the leader who is the guest. Imagine now that a quarrel starts somewhere in this peaceful gathering. Imagine that everyone remains calmly seated where he is. The result would be that the voice of the leader would reach every person in the audience. He can even go to the men who are fighting and calm them. Even if this does not happen, the fighting would not spread when nobody wants it and we would not be accused of disturbing public peace. In the army, this is how they act. Everyone keeps to his place. No person can leave his place and go elsewhere till he is ordered to do so, nor can he interfere in other matters. We, too, are a non-violent army fighting for swaraj. We also have to do our duty keeping to our own place. We need not concern ourselves with what others are doing. We know that other workers will look after matters in their respective fields. A non-violent army demands, or should insist upon, greater discipline, self-restraint and orderliness than what are necessary in an army equipped with arms.

I had a bitter experience of scheming as well as of love in Calcutta. The bitterness prevailing among the different parties in

Calcutta will, I think, be hardly found anywhere else. I see nothing but poison in the writings of the English papers which oppose non-co-operation. There is no limit to the malicious criticism of the writings of non-co-operators and no end of lies which are spread against them. As if this were not enough, the writings and speeches of our great poet, Rabindranath Thakur, are used to such wicked purposes that I simply cannot understand how people have the courage to misrepresent things so completely. Observing these lies, I often picture to myself the conditions in *Ravanarajya*[1]. Where there is no discrimination in the choice of means, cunning and deception should not surprise us. It would never have been possible for Ravana to carry off Sitaji if he had appeared before her as the demon which he was. He could do so only by assuming the form of a sadhu. When saintliness is thus used as a cover, destruction soon overtakes the man. I see the English papers here spreading falsehood in the name of truth. I have referred to this poisonous atmosphere merely in order that the non-co-operators may draw a lesson from it, that they should keep away from such falsehood. We should never forget that our weapons are non-violence and truth.

A spinning-wheel exhibition is being held here in the National College. I saw there about fifteen types of new spinning-wheels. The ingenious devices they display are endless. A good many young men have been putting their talents to good use. Some of the spinning-wheels were beautiful indeed. Some were very small. I saw one which could be carried in a little box. One could be put in a chest while another was fitted with a musical instrument. But I did not see any which could match the conventional type in producing yarn. The conclusion, therefore, which I certainly draw from all these attempts at invention was that the spinning-wheel had now become very popular and that improvements in the existing type were exercising the ingenuity of innumerable engineers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

[1] Rule of Ravana, based on complete disregard for moral values

60. WHAT SHOULD GUJARAT DO?

We considered how, from the point of view of practical arrangements, we can make the ensuing session of the Congress a good success.[1] Let us now examine the matter from the point of view of larger considerations.

If a province invites a session of the Congress, it is presupposed that the province has the right to do so and is fit to exercise the right. Every province, of course, has such a right, but a province may or may not be fit to exercise it.

We have invited the Congress session and thereby increased our responsibility, have pledged ourselves to implement its resolutions more effectively than other provinces and declared our resolve to do our utmost to that end.

According to the resolution of the Congress, we must secure this year a settlement of the Khilafat issue and justice regarding the Punjab. The Congress has also indicated the means to be adopted to achieve these objectives and the All-India Congress Committee has shown how to employ them:

1. Remaining peaceful.
2. Strengthening Hindu-Muslim unity.
3. For effecting complete boycott of foreign cloth, every province and every village should employ the spinning-wheel and the handloom to produce the khadi it needs.

After a tour of the Surat district, Shri Vithalbhai Patel came to Calcutta for the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. He reported that Gujarat, and particularly the Surat district, was ready for swaraj. Men and women both.

I asked him: "Are any men and women ready to go to jail, and do the rest promise to remain peaceful?"

Shri Vithalbhai replied: "In Surat district, thousands of men and women will come forward to court imprisonment and peace will be preserved even if they are imprisoned."

I was as much surprised as pleased to hear this. I was not ready for such an answer. That thousands of women of noble Gujarat should be ready to go to jail may seem unbelievable. But everything is possible with God. He is doing miracles all the time. The axis of the earth He has created never wears out! His sun

[1] *Vide* "Preparation for Congress", 4-9-1921.

never forgets to rise! Were it not that these things happen before our very eyes, would we believe them?

However, if Gujarat, or Surat, is really ready, they will have to provide some indication of their readiness beforehand. We see signs of the coming sunrise two hours before the event. Similarly, we should be able to observe the twilight hour between the vanishing of the darkness of slavery and the rising of the sun of swaraj. The fact that we have succeeded in collecting the money is one indication, but the real sign is swadeshi. Has Gujarat made a bonfire of foreign cloth or totally renounced its use? Has it stopped ordering foreign cloth? Have the people in the villages of Gujarat started wearing khadi, producing their own requirements? Do the weavers of Gujarat weave only hand-spun yarn? Have the agents in Gujarat stopped running up to Bombay for cloth? Have the *Meghawals* in Gujarat, who had left off their profession, taken up weaving again? Do all women in Gujarat spin as a matter of duty? Are the foreign cloth shops in Gujarat about to close down? The answers to these questions will decide whether it is fit.

So long as we have not started wearing khadi, so long as both men and women love foreign cloth, who will believe them even if they declare that they are ready to go to jail? I hope nobody will argue: "I can go to jail, but I do not have the courage to wear khadi; I feel ashamed to spin and I find weaving tedious." If we have lost the capacity to preserve peace, our capacity to make noise at meetings should also leave us. We should be able to see thousands of people moving in perfect silence. As long as we lack such discipline, who will believe that we shall never resort to violence despite efforts to provoke us?

Shri Vithalbhai, when reporting as above, also said that, if I held it necessary that we should also be rid of the uncleanness of untouchability, there was no possibility of our getting swaraj this year, for not a single school was ready to admit children of *Dheds*[1] or *Bhangis*.

I am convinced that, if we let our minds remain tainted with the uncleanness of our prejudice against the *Dheds* and *Bhangis*, God will never help us to win swaraj and the Englishmen's contempt for us will never disappear. Self-purification is the foundation on which our swaraj is to rest. Securing swaraj is like ascending to heaven. Yudhisthira refused to enter the gate of heaven without his dog. Do we hope to get into the temple of swaraj ourselves, leaving our *Bhangi* brethren behind and running at top speed

[1] Untouchables

towards it? If we cherish any such hope, we are in for a bitter experience. Reaching the gates of the temple, we shall find that they are closed.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-9-1921

61. *MY NOTES*

Where Will People Park Their Shoes?

Everybody is hoping, or fearing, that no chair will be seen at the Ahmedabad Congress. A friend, therefore, raised a query: "But where will all these people deposit their shoes?" I replied: "Everybody can remove his shoes and carry them under his arm and, to help them to do so, we shall keep small khadi sacks for sale." People may also bring their own sacks. If shoes are removed and put into these sacks, there would be no problem whatever. Another method, followed in Europe, is that everybody deposits his shoes with a custodian and gets a token from him. The token may be returned and one may have one's shoes back any time one likes. I have no doubt that the better way is to carry them in a sack. The test of our efficiency lies in making advance provision for everything to the minutest detail.

Food Arrangements

While discussing food arrangements with people, I felt that we should maintain language-wise kitchens and instruct the secretaries of the respective regions to bring their own cooks. Our responsibility will be to supply provisions, water, plates, utensils, etc. This idea was approved by everyone here with whom I discussed it. This will leave no room for complaint about food arrangements. Very often people from one region cannot digest food from another region. Probably the Khilafat Camp will make arrangements for non-vegetarians. For those who are accustomed to living and eating in the English style, we may not make any arrangements in the camp but negotiate with hotel-keepers and communicate their rates and addresses to various Provincial Committees so that such people may make their own arrangements directly. If we do this, we shall be saved many anxieties and everybody will be provided for according to his taste. To this end, we should start correspondence with the different provinces right now and make all arrangements. We should advise them as to what we consider desirable

and, after obtaining their comments, the arrangements should be finalized.

HOW MANY TO ARRANGE FOR?

We may assume that ten thousand persons will attend the Congress, including visitors and delegates. We shall, however, do well to presume that the population of Ahmedabad will go up at least by one lakh, taking into account spectators and sight-seers. As we are bound to arrange for their boarding and lodging, it is imperative that we make the requisite arrangements in advance instead of leaving people to fend for themselves.

EXHIBITION

As part of the Congress session there is bound to be an exhibition. I think that we should display in it only products of ancient Indian crafts and khadi, and the various steps in the processing of cotton. We need not at all exhibit mill cloth. I noticed this error in the Bombay exhibition. It will be proper for us to exhibit only cloth in which both warp and woof are hand-spun. Ahmedabad even today remains a veritable storehouse of ancient crafts. We may well find room for carvings in wood or ivory and ancient paintings but, in respect of cloth, we should resolutely refuse to admit anything except khadi and implements required for the manufacture of khadi. I place these ideas before the Committee for their consideration. I hope that it will not be assumed during the discussion that my views ought to be accepted because they are mine; I should like the Committee to examine this suggestion impartially along with suggestions from others.

VOLUNTEERS

A great deal will depend on the sincerity, courtesy and resourcefulness of the volunteers. I saw in Bengal that all volunteers wore dhotis. In East Bengal, I found that both Hindus and Muslims wore dhotis. Muslims wore caps and Hindus did not. I did not hear any complaint from anywhere that the volunteers felt their movements restricted unless they wore trousers. I have a good deal of experience in this matter and I have come to the conclusion that peaceful volunteers' uniform must not emulate that of a policeman or a soldier. The very presence of a volunteer of non-co-operation should suggest non-violence. A military uniform is inconsistent with this. It is the practice of many volunteers to carry swords or other weapons. They should give this up. At a public meeting at Howrah, a volunteer carried a dagger, but Maulana Mahomed Ali took it away from him. If we have decided that

we will kill no one, that we shall lay down our own lives instead, why should we need swords? What will a sword symbolize?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-9-1921

62. *SPEECH AT KUMBAKONAM*

September 18, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for all these addresses and the sentiments contained in them. I am sorry, and I know that you will share my sorrow, that Maulana Mahomed Ali and his Begum are not with us. Happily I have Maulana Azad Sobhani of Cawnpore with me. I hardly think that in this din and noise you will have the opportunity of hearing his message. There are three indispensable conditions that we have to fulfil if we desire the attainment of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs this year.

They are, firstly, absolute unity between the Hindus and Mussulmans, each party retaining their own ties in spite of the madness of some Moplahs. The second condition is non-violence, and the third condition is swadeshi. And it has been unfortunate to find that swadeshi has made the least headway in this Presidency. You must all discard foreign cloth and take up spinning and weaving. There is a fourth condition which must be fulfilled by the Hindus, and that is the removal of the curse of untouchability. Unless we remove that blot it is utterly impossible to get swaraj.

I know that of all places in India, Madras is the worst regarding untouchability. I hope, therefore, that the people of Kumbakonam will take care to set their house in order in this respect. We cannot keep a fifth part of the Hindu humanity outside the pale of society and claim to have swaraj. The conditions that I have mentioned to you are easy of fulfilment, and I pray to God that He may give you and me wisdom and courage to follow them out in their entirety.

The Hindu, 19-9-1921

and, after obtaining their comments, the arrangements should be finalized.

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We may assume that ten thousand persons will attend the Congress, including visitors and delegates. We shall, however, do well to presume that the population of Ahmedabad will go up at least by one lakh, taking into account spectators and sight-seers. As we are bound to arrange for their boarding and lodging, it is imperative that we make the requisite arrangements in advance instead of leaving people to fend for themselves.

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Congress Committee for its address. I know that you are all sorry that Maulana Mahomed Ali is not in our midst tonight, nor is Begum Sahiba, but you see to my right a learned Muslim divine in the person of Maulana Azad Sobhani. He has been moving amongst the Mussulmans of Trichinopoly during the day. I have no doubt that the Mussulmans of this place understand exactly what their duty is by Islam and their country. You may not all know that Maulana Shaukat Ali also was arrested in Bombay on the 17th instant, and up in the Punjab, the same honours were given to Dr. Kitchlew[1]. I do not know the reason that actuated the Government in arresting Dr. Kitchlew, but the Bombay Government have been good enough to inform the public of the reasons why they have arrested the Ali Brothers. The first reason stated by the Bombay Government is that they have tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Government *communique* goes on to state how they tampered with the loyalty of the Army. The Brothers were a party to a resolution at a conference in Karachi which called upon the Mussulmans to warn any Mussulman against serving in the Army and telling every Mussulman soldier that in terms of Islam it was a sin to serve in the British Army. I am sorry that I was not present at that historic conference in Karachi and had I been present there and had the conference permitted me, I should also have been one of those who would have supported that resolution. (Laughter,) Only a Mussulman can say whether it is a sin for a Mussulman to serve in the British Army at the present moment, but as a Hindu and as an Indian, I know what my duty and what the duty of every Hindu, every Indian, should be on such an occasion. I know that it is a sin for a single Indian to serve either in the British Army, or in any of the civil departments of this Government, and if a public declaration of this character even in the presence of soldiers constituted the offence of tampering with the loyalty of the soldiers of the British Army, let me tell this meeting and through this meeting the Government of India, that I have committed the offence of tampering with the soldiers serving in the British Army, times without number. Nor is it a new offence; it was an offence deliberately committed by me in the month of September last year, and it was an offence committed also by the Indian National Congress in the month of September at Calcutta[2] and deliberately repeated at Nagpur[3]. If

[1] A Congress Worker from the Punjab, an associate of Gandhiji; winner of Lenin Peace Prize.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XVIII, pp. 230-1.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIX, Appendix I.

63. LETTER TO SIDNEY BURN[1]

[After *September 18, 1921*]

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant. I had intended to pass through the Pudukkottai State on my way to Chettinad. But in view of your letter[2], I shall alter my route.

I have, etc.,

From a photostat: S.N. 7618

64. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TRICHINOPOLY,
Silence Day, September 19, 1921

Hindus and Muslims will never come together unless they learn the lesson of peace.

I paid no attention to the proposal of making a declaration of independence at Ahmedabad. We have not the strength to make such a declaration. And what is the use of talking about it in the absence of such strength? Had we the necessary strength I would certainly be ready to make the declaration.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 37

65. SPEECH AT TRICHINOPOLY[3]

September 19, 1921

FRIENDS,

It gives me much pleasure to renew your acquaintance in this historic city. I thank the Municipality for its address and also the

[1] Sir Sidney Burn, I. C. S., Administrator, Pudukkottai State; later judge, Madras High Court

[2] Which read: " . . . you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you will attempt to do so you will be stopped at the frontier by the police."

[3] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan translated Gandhiji's speech in English into Tamil, sentence by sentence.

their religion and who have acquired an influence over the masses, but whilst I must analyse the mentality of this Government, and whilst I must draw your attention to the sins of this Government, I would warn you against becoming excited and going in for violence. I tender my congratulation to our countrymen throughout India that in spite of provocation of this grave type given to the country, the country has observed what I venture to call divine peace. I hope that the peace that reigns supreme in India today is due not to the fear of the British bayonet, but is due to a consciousness of our growing strength and a consciousness of our own pledge solemnly given in September and repeated in December. If in spite of the existing provocation and in spite of still further provocations that may be in store for us, if we keep to our promise and retain this peace up to the end, I assure you that this very Government will still apologize to India for the wrong done to the Khilafat, for the wrong done to the Punjab and for the wrong done to the Ali Brothers. Let us understand what this Government stands for. It has chiefly sustained itself for all these long years by a system of terrorism as its final refuge. We have for the last 12 months repeatedly challenged the Government to do its worst. If we deliberately and consciously run into fire, we must not blame the fire for scorching us. We have known by previous experience what this Government is capable of doing under certain given circumstances. We have lighted the fire of Government's ire, let us not now in a cowardly manner run away from it and, if we stand the rigorous test to which we are subjected today, I promise that inside of three months you will establish swaraj in India, and you will call yours a free country. Let non-violence be a weapon not of the weak, but of the strong even as it was with the two Brothers. When the Government understands that no amount of provocation will goad us into madness, but that we have proposed henceforth to remain sane, you will find that there will be nothing that this Government can do to oust us from the position that we ought to occupy. I ask the Mussulmans as also the Hindus, if they have understood the spirit of the working of the Brothers, if they have understood the spirit of the message of non-co-operation and if they are lovers of their religion and their country, I ask both Mussulmans and Hindus, not to be irritated but remain calm and firm in their determination to vindicate the honour of their religion and their country.

There is only one thing and one thing only that has got to be done by every woman and every man in India and that is to discard all the foreign clothes and all the foreign fineries which have

neither the Congress nor I have hitherto gone to individual soldiers and individual employees in the Government departments, it is not because of want of will, but because of want of ability. In our unfortunate country in which poverty is day by day deepening and in which starvation faces lakhs upon lakhs of our countrymen and countrywomen, it has not been possible for us, up to now, to call upon the soldiers individually, to appeal to them and ask them for the sake of their country and for the sake of their religion to give up their employment and do their duty. What I venture to warn the Government is that as soon as the country has received and assimilated the gospel of the spinning-wheel and swaraj and as soon as the soldiers and others are ready to take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom, I promise that if I have got still the strength left in me and the personal liberty that is vouchsafed to me by this Government, I promise that I shall undertake to go to every one of the soldiers and every one of those who are serving in the civil departments of Government to give up his employment and take up the spinning-wheel; but even at this very moment, I invite every soldier who calls himself an Indian and every servant in Government employment that if he has understood the message of swadeshi, it is his bounden duty to leave his employment under this Government which has emasculated this country, which has put affronts upon Islam and which has made itself responsible for the tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh. I say that it is a sin for anybody to serve this Government and if they have got a hope in swadeshi they will do well to leave their employment under this Government.

The second reason given by the Government of Bombay is that these Brothers have made speeches inciting to violence. I know the Brothers, I know almost all the speeches that they have delivered and I venture from this platform to deny that charge *in toto*. The Brothers have ever, in private and in public, to my knowledge weaned the people from any tendency to violence, but I shall tell you the reason why the Government have laid their hands upon the two Brothers. They are brave, they are truthful and they are lovers of their religion and their country and they have acquired an influence upon Indians such as no other Indians have acquired during their lifetime over them. Theirs is a name to conjure with among the Mussulmans and they have found an abiding place in the hearts of millions of Hindus and Mussulmans. They stand, as no Mussulmans have stood, for Hindu-Muslim unity. This Government has no room for brave people, for fearless people, for people who are truthful, who are lovers of their country and

instinctively demands from us that we spin and weave our cloth in our own homes.

Like the students, lawyers also have enquired of me in Bengal, in Madras and also in Kumbakonam and it is not for us to point the finger of scorn at them, if they have not seen their way to suspend practice, but I venture to invite them to follow the gospel of swadeshi and in every way possible to help the swadeshi movement, at least they are expected to have the courage of wearing khaddar in the law-courts. If they have faith in swaraj, I certainly expect them and their household to set apart an hour or two every day for spinning religiously. If today people of different types and qualities have found themselves on public platforms, I hope that the lawyers will be patient enough and realize the dignity of labour and realize the dignity of service among the rank and file. Courage, endurance and above all, fearlessness and spirit of willing sacrifices are the qualities that are required today in India for leadership. I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that an illiterate *Panchama* brother who can exhibit these qualities in their fulness is more able than a frail person like myself to lead a movement of this character, for what we are pining for is not a complicated thing, but a very simple thing called swaraj, our birthright. I have no doubt in my mind that simple godfearing women can lead a movement of this character if they have the qualities that I have mentioned and I invite the women of Trichinopoly to play their part and give their full share on the altar of sacrifice. Seeing that our battle is non-violent, I warn everyone in this audience against the spirit of intolerance seizing hold of us. Students who have left schools or colleges or lawyers who have suspended practice may not adopt an air of superiority and look down upon those students and lawyers who have not conformed to the Congress resolution. There is room enough on the swaraj platform for the weakest and the strongest of Indians. The army of non-violence can take in children and even disabled men if they have got a true heart.

One thing more in connection with the Moplah revolt and I shall have done. I know that what has happened in Malabar has been preying upon all of us who have understood anything about the situation there. My heart bleeds to think that our Moplah brethren have gone mad. I am grieved to find that they have killed officers. I am grieved to think that they have looted Hindu houses leaving many hundreds of men and women homeless and foodless. I am grieved to think that they have endeavoured forcibly to convert Hindus to Islam and by all these acts they have done

hitherto been a sign of our bondage. It is not enough that you throw away a few rags from your houses and from your boxes but it is necessary for the women of Trichinopoly to part with their finest saris which they have hugged to themselves hitherto which are made from foreign yarn. That will give me the measure of your affection for your religion, for your country and for the Ali Brothers and let the men of Trichinopoly, whether they are Hindus or Mussulmans, permit themselves to be measured by the same standard and let them not be found wanting tomorrow morning. You may not have the splendid organizing talent and the inexhaustible energy of Maulana Shaukat Ali. You may not have the eloquence of a Mahomed Ali, but every Hindu and every Mussulman can easily imitate their faculty for renouncing every happiness on earth for the sake of their religion and their country. You can discard even as they have done every foreign garment about you. You can wear as heavy khaddar as these two big Brothers have been wearing for the last six months. That will be the true measure of your affection for them. That will be a tangible demonstration of your recognition of true non-violence and recognition of Hindu-Muslim unity for we are united immediately we show that we have a common purpose.

The students in Kumbakonam and the students in Madras also asked me what was their duty at a critical period of our history. Their clearest duty was placed before them in September and December and that was to leave every school which was either managed by the Government or aided by it and I congratulate those students of Trichinopoly who had the courage of their conviction and who could see the necessity for abandoning Government schools. I congratulate them on having done splendid work during these months and I render my sympathy to those students who for some reason or other could not see their way to leave their old schools, but they can still serve their country if they will. They can religiously set apart a definite hour or two, as the case may be, for spinning on behalf of India. They can adopt khaddar like everybody else. On the altar of swadeshi we can invite co-operators and non-co-operators, those who are serving the Government and those who are not serving the Government, we invite all who care to call themselves Indians. Just as it is our primary duty to eat the food that is grown in India and cooked in India, so is it our primary duty to clothe ourselves with cloth that has been spun and woven in India; and, just as we realize instinctively that the true law of economics requires that we should cook our own food in our own homes, so the law of economics

instinctively demands from us that we spin and weave our cloth in our own homes.

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an injury . . . but all the same let us have a due sense of proportion. Their acts are not the acts of all the Muslims of India even, nor, thank God, of all the Moplahs. Every Mussulman of note that I know has repudiated every one of their acts. Let our loyalty to Hindu-Muslim unity therefore remain firm and changeless. Our loyalty to that creed may still have to suffer greater shocks, but so long as we are satisfied, that there is nothing in Islam to warrant any of the things that these misguided Moplahs have done, and so long as we are satisfied as I am satisfied that no sensible Mussulman approves of these acts, or any single one of them, our loyalty to the creed of Hindu-Muslim unity need not suffer any shock whatsoever. Let us not also for one moment imagine that had it not been for the British bayonet peace could never have been restored in Malabar. All the world over, wherever there are men and women they fight sometimes, they sometimes break their heads and run amok, but there has never been any difficulty about settling their own quarrels. Where was the Government and its police when the first Moplah ran amok? What is the use of a Government that knows only how to exact reprisals, but does not know how to protect life in its initial stages? Of what use is a Government whose police are never expected to run the slightest risk and which takes a thousand lives against one life. Of what use is a Government which, having known the temperament of the Moplahs for years and years, failed to bring the lesson of peace to them. Lastly, what is the use of a Government that left those Hindus absolutely unarmed for self-defence. With the Moplahs of Malabar, I know that non-violence is not their final creed as it is mine. The Government of Bombay has thrown dust into our eyes by connecting the Moplah outbreak with the arrest of Ali Brothers. Even before non-co-operation was born in India, such outbreaks have occurred all over and the Government was powerless to protect life and property in the initial stages, as it was unable hopelesssly to protect life and property in Shahabad three years ago.[1] Where was its power of protection when nearly, if I am right, for a week or at least three or four days, the whole villages were given up to pillage and plunder by infuriated Hindus against Mussulmans. Therefore I hope that this big meeting will draw the only lesson that is possible from the Moplah outbreak, not to swerve an inch from our settled programme, but to go forward

[1] The reference is to the riots which had broken out there during September-October, 1917; *vide* Vols. XIII and XIV.

with redoubled effort and finish it during this very year so that we can establish swaraj.

I understand that in connection with a kind of riot in connection with a theatre Manager nearly 40 persons have been arrested. I must confess that I like the idea of that arrest. Every Congressman, certainly every Congress leader must hold himself responsible for the observance of peace in his own village and district and whether we have been in a particular affray or not, let the Government hold us as hostages, in connection with every such affray anywhere for there is no doubt about it that we must hold ourselves responsible for awakening India to life. We must hold ourselves responsible for also making the people feel their own strength, and the duty therefore undoubtedly devolves upon every one of us to see to it that people continue to remain in a disciplined state . . . We may disclaim legal liability but we may not escape moral liability for any outbreak of violence in any part. . . Let us have no noisy demonstrations, no shouts, no pressure to be put upon a single man who is a co-operator as behoves peaceful men. When we attend meetings let us make no noisy demonstrations; but, let us silently work away at the spinning-wheel and complete the boycott of foreign cloth, if possible, even during this very month. Let us occupy every spare moment at our disposal in manufacturing yarn and weaving cloth. I know no other way of winning swaraj and winning also the release of the Ali Brothers and all those who may be imprisoned who are innocent men.

I thank you for the exemplary patience with which you have listened to me, I hope that you will listen to Maulana Azad Sobhani with the same amount of patience.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

66. *MESSAGE TO CONGRESS COMMITTEE, KARUR*

TRICHINOPOLY,
September 20, 1921

I am sorry that the programme already drawn up does not permit my paying Karur a visit. I know how well you have worked for temperance reform. But I was sorry to hear of the pressure put upon a theatre manager for contributions to the Tilak Swaraj Fund or a temple. If we are to attain swaraj during this year we must be able to control all the unruly elements amongst us and prevent violence from whatever cause arising . . . under-

stand that over forty citizens have been arrested who had no hand whatsoever in the investment of the theatre. Nevertheless I congratulate those who are arrested. The arrest, I regard as a compliment paid to us. It shows that the Government expect us to keep the peace even by those who are unconnected with the movement. I hope that as true non-co-operators they will go to prison. I hope, too, that in spite of what the Government may do non-violence will be strictly observed and finally I hope that the wives and other relations of those who have been arrested will keep firm and allow the latter to go to jail without offering any defence whatsoever.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

67. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, SRIRANGAM

September 20, 1921

The Mahatma in the course of his short reply said that the money realized from the sale of the silver plate presented to him would go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, for he had absolutely no boxes to keep such gifts. He drew the attention of the Municipality and in fact of every municipality which deserved its existence to three things; if they wished to take part in the great movement of national regeneration, they should see that no citizen of Srirangam should be without khaddar and no citizen had foreign cloth in his house. Secondly, they should see the drink evil was entirely obliterated in their midst. Thirdly, there should be no blot of untouchability; there was no sanction in the Hindu religion for this blot which was eating into the very vitals of India and he was sure when they got out of this curse, they were entitled to swaraj. When 22 crores of Hindus were steeped in this Satanic superstition, it was impossible for Mussulmans to make progress independent of Hindus. He therefore urged upon the people of Srirangam who had such magnificent temples which should constantly remind them of their duty to banish the idea of untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

68. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SRIRANGAM*

September 20, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you sincerely for the beautiful address, I call it beautiful because it is printed on leaves. The beauty of it is, let me tell you, somewhat marred in that you have written your address or printed it not in your own language, or the national language, Hindustani, but in a language which has really no place in our national intercourse. English is a language of diplomacy and of international commerce. I know you will not misunderstand me because I may request use of the English language as one of the greatest of world languages. I think that there is a great deal in the English literature which we could learn with profit. But even as dirt is described as matter "misplaced" so also is our use of English in the wrong place as here obnoxious. Each time I have to use English in order to transmit my thoughts to my countrymen and each time I hear English in our mutual intercourse, I feel deeply the sting of ever-growing humiliation. And so, as you know, I have collected from our Marwari friends Rs. 50,000 for Hindi propaganda in your Presidency. I do hope, therefore, that instead of making a vain effort to attain eloquence in the English language we shall strive earnestly to become eloquent in our own vernaculars and in the national language. In these days of unbelief it is a rare thing for one to hear the beautiful music of the Sanskrit language. I tell you, although the verses were unfortunately in my own praise, I did not mind enjoying the Sanskrit verses so beautifully pronounced by the blind poet under that leaf cottage. If we really love our country we must cultivate a taste for all that is good, for all that is noble in our country. It, therefore, grieves me when I see our women coming out of our homes bedecked in foreign garments coloured in all kinds of fantastic manner. You with your bare clean bodies and with your *tilak*[1] on the forehead are beautiful to look at. But I despair of our country when I see even you hugging foreign cloth. You who seem to be leading a state of happy and prosperous life in this little happy island, little realize what the introduction of the *videshi* clothes has meant to India. It has meant literal ruin and starvation to millions of Indian homes. Bad as is our military drain

[1] Vermilion marks

and the drain in the shape of pensions given to men who have not made India their home, bad as is the drain in the shape of home charges[1], nothing had so emasculated the nation as its enforced idleness by the deprivation of cloth manufacture. This disappearance of the second large source of revenue to India had driven thousands of women to a life of shame and degradation. It has unfitted us to resist the ravages of famine and disease. And so we have in India the unparalleled phenomenon of many millions of men who are undergoing semi-starvation but who are as cultured as any on the face of the earth living in almost perpetual bondage under one lakh of Englishmen. If your outward sympathy is an expression of the inner, and if you miss the presence of the Ali Brothers as I do, you will have no hesitation about discarding your garments made of foreign yarn and even the most learned among you taking to the spinning-wheel as a sacrament. Further, if the outer symbols of your Hinduism are an earnest of your inner purity, you will get rid of the curse of untouchability. As a *sanatani* Hindu I venture to assert that there is no warrant for untouchability in Hinduism. I am surprised that it has assumed a virulent form in this land of Shankara and Ramanuja. I assure you, you have misread the teachings of these great men if you consider that they would have regarded the very shadow of a *Panchama* brother to be a pollution. I hope, therefore, that you will exorcize the demon of untouchability from your midst and embrace the *Panchama* as a blood brother. That ours is a movement of self-purification is apparent from the fact that the drink evil is disappearing from us. I congratulate you on your share in the campaign. I hope that you will put forth greater effort in all directions and give your full quota to swadeshi, temperance, and untouchability.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

69. REPLY TO EDITOR, "INDIAN DAILY TELEGRAPH"

[*September 21, 1921*][2]

Mr. Gandhi has replied to another set of questions put to him by Mr. J. M. Mackenzie, editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph*.

[QUESTION] 1 : Do you think that the South African republic deserves kicking for withholding the one demand which India went to the Imperial

[1] Payments made in England for so-called services by Englishmen

[2] Released on this date from Lucknow by the Associated Press of India

Conference to seek and can you not pay a fresh visit to the land of your early triumphs in order that the whole of India may rest satisfied?

[ANSWER :] The question in India is really an enlarged edition of the South African. If I succeed here, the other is automatically solved.

2 : As you have not yet gained self-mastery, can you realize and mark the dismal state of the rest of us tossed about by climate which is so thoroughly debauching?

Being imperfect I do realize the imperfections of my fellow-beings and hence my belief in non-violence.

3 : Do you fear that the awesome fate of Russian people may overtake your beloved country, if you compel it to part with everything but its distressing nakedness?

I do not know the fate of Russia, but I do know Indian. This enforced nakedness is being turned into voluntary . . . I am practising my theory and therefore cannot go wrong in my calculations.

4 : Seeing that both obstinate and pliable fall into the slough of despond, don't you think that there is something to be said for the methods of Mr. Ready-to-halt or even Mr. Facing-both-ways or are you determined to carry your bundle to the gate of the City Beautiful?

You have given me the choice of two evils. I prefer obstinate and pliable to ready-to-halt and facing-both-ways, but I hope I belong to neither class. I own I have as my company all those lonely gentlemen of whom you have written. You will find in the end that I was a light-weight champion. I put away all my bundles at the commencement of the journey.

5 : As you have collected so much money, do you not feel that country-side would appreciate a donation from you towards Queen Victoria in honour of the sovereign whose love for India must have inspired you with worthy feelings at the start of your career?

Can I persuade you to believe that I am engaged in erecting much more desirable memorial to the late Queen than the one you contemplate?

6 : In view of the existing conditions, what is your solution for South African trouble?

My solution for South African trouble is to give India what she wants. First cast out the beam and the mote will take care of itself.

The Hindu, 22-9-1921

70. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, DINDIGUL

September 21, 1921

CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF DINDIGUL,

I thank you sincerely for the address that you have given me and the sentiments contained therein. I can only expect your address as a manifestation of your desire to associate yourselves fully with the spirit of self-sacrifice that is spreading throughout the length and breadth of India. As I said elsewhere, I venture to point out to you here also three things which you can tackle usefully and without the slightest injury to our political status and that is temperance, swadeshi and untouchability. You are the custodians of the health and the interests of the citizens of Dindigul . . . and your *Panchama* brethren whom you represent in the Municipal Council . . . and therefore you should get rid of untouchability which is one of the ways to obtain swaraj for India. Similarly it is open to you to organize boycott of foreign clothes and the manufacture of swadeshi clothes in a manner in which any authority can do satisfactorily because you control the citizens of Dindigul and also in the teetotal campaign. I can only hope that by personal example and by passing resolutions in your Council and resetting the whole machinery, you will achieve these three objects . . . I thank you once more for the address.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

71. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, DINDIGUL[1]

September 21, 1921

The citizens of Dindigul presented Mahatmaji with purse in aid of the Smyrna and the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Mahatma Gandhi then made the following speech which was translated into Tamil by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan :

When I saw your representatives in Trichinopoly insisting upon Maulana Saheb and myself coming to this town, I thought you would show me some extraordinary results of non-co-operation. I had expected you all to be dressed in khaddar homespun and home-

[1] At the maidan near the Rock

woven. I had expected to find every house in Dindigul with a spinning-wheel. But I find only much noise and enthusiasm here . . . If we want swaraj or the release of Ali Brothers and their comrades, our enthusiasm should be developed in the proper channel. You have only three hundred spinning-wheels in Dindigul; you have a population of thirty thousand of whom ten thousand are Mohammedans and twenty thousand are Hindus. Counting five to a family on an average, you should have at least 6,000 families here with 6,000 spinning-wheels running from day to day. There is no swaraj without swadeshi. Swadeshi means not only the production of our country's needs, but also getting redress for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in a non-violent way. I understand that you are divided into petty factions. There is certainly no swaraj if everyone wanted to mind his own business nor if Hindus wanted to observe their superiority or segregate the *Panchamas*.

Throughout my travel in this Presidency nothing had oppressed me so much as the untouchability. I claim to be a *sanatani* Hindu with a due sense of my responsibility to my religion. I venture to say that there is no warrant in Hindu Shastras for untouchability. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to give up treating human beings as less than dogs, we have no right to swaraj. I have given you all the conditions necessary for the attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and Khilafat grievances. If the Muslims love their Khilafat as much as their lives, if the Muslims and their Hindu brethren love Ali Brothers and if the Hindus and the Muslims want swaraj they should all take to spinning and weaving. Let Hindus and Muslims treat one another as their blood-brothers and whilst each remains firm in his faith, each must sacrifice for the other, that we should all be non-violent in spite of the gravest provocation that we might receive, that Hindus should put an end to untouchability and embrace their *Panchama* brethren. I don't want you to eat and drink with them or have inter-marriages. But your Hinduism demands you to give an equal right to all human beings. I want you to give the *Panchama* the same right which any human being has a right to ask of you and which you claim from all the rest. These conditions being fulfilled, I have not a shadow of doubt that we will have swaraj within this year. May God help us in our attempts.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

72. SPEECH AT MADURA

September 21, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for these addresses this evening. We cannot attain swaraj by presentation of ten thousand addresses even. It makes me very sad to hear all this noise and I do not propose to tax you with words which would tackle your patience. You say in your addresses that this is a dharma war. Demonstrations and noise of this kind are against swaraj. I am sorry I came to Madura to see all this babble. I hope your leaders will tell you what your duty is for the attainment of swaraj. If you want dharma raj in India you must work your spinning-wheel which is a sign of peace and Hindu-Muslim unity. You should remove untouchability because the religion does not allow it. You should see that drinking is completely stopped. I hope your leaders would advise on all these points.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

73. NOTES

BENGAL

Bengal is a big province, and the reader will not be surprised if he finds these notes predominantly devoted to Bengal doings. I have not hesitated to say in private conversations, that in point of swadeshi, of all the provinces Bengal stands at the bottom. The mass appearance in a Bengal village or town does not wear the swadeshi stamp. Khadi is least in evidence in Bengal. But the signs of a coming revival are not wanting. The charkha has not taken deep root as yet, as it has done elsewhere. But it is becoming general everywhere. I saw it in its diminutive form at Silchar and Sylhet. It is almost a toy. It is good enough for spinning, but its yield is very little. It was more in evidence at Chittagong, and of a better type. They have devised an ingenious little portable thing which the boys and girls like. It is neat, beautiful and cheap. But like the Silchar pattern it does not give as much yarn as the original type. In Barisal, on the other hand, we saw a clever contrivance in which you move the wheel

with a pedal. They were not able to give me the yield of the machine. But, I should not be surprised if it gives as much as the ancient wheel. All these inventions show that the *rentio*[1] is growing in popularity and has come to stay. In Barisal, moreover, it was a pleasure to see very fine and even yarn, turned out by the boys of the National School. The quantity displayed was not to be despised. The weaving shed in Barisal appeared to be nice, neat and roomy. The looms were all fly-shuttle after the Serampur style. The organizers have under their control nearly 80 looms. In an adjoining room they had stock worth about Rs. 15,000. They have not yet learnt the absolute necessity of using only hand-spun yarn both for warp and woof. I do urge upon all Congress organizations the paramount necessity of *their* using only hand-spun yarn for both warp and woof. The mixed thing has already become marketable. And the Congress workers need not—ought not to—waste their time over things which an ordinary trader can attend to.

But, of course, these looms and the few wheels I saw cannot clothe Bengal. And Bengal cannot help the swaraj movement, if it has to depend upon Bombay and Ahmedabad for the cloth supply. Just as a man forced to be hungry cannot be induced to think of God, so may not millions of Bengalis forced to remain in a state of semi-starvation, think of or appreciate swaraj. The first indispensable condition of swaraj is, that each province becomes self-contained for its food and clothing.

But Bengal will not lag behind when once she is fully awakened. She has a fine imagination. Her villages retain their simplicity. Her sons are clever and pushful, her daughters graceful, simple and lovely. Both men and women are intensely religious. Their faith is ennobling. The memory of the charkha is still alive. Bengal has but to realize, that she manufactured the finest fabrics not merely for herself, not merely for India but for the outside world as well, and she will beat her own past record, glorious as it is. Bengal is beginning to realize, that if her millions of women have forgotten the art of spinning, no other activity has replaced it, and that the root cause of her poverty as well as of the rest of India, is the enforced idleness of her peasantry. I feel sure, that Bengal is about to understand the full message of the spinning-wheel, and then she will take India by storm.

As a friend said, Bengal has to unlearn much. Like several other provinces, she has not a clean slate to write upon. She has

[1] Spinning-wheel

for instance to unlearn that cloth woven in Dacca from foreign yarn is swadeshi.

Of Strikes

The Assam-Bengal Railway and the steamer strikes were out of the ordinary, the first attempt, as I have found, to have strikes out of sympathy for those outside labour unions. The strikes were therefore sympathetic, humanitarian or political. I had the pleasure of meeting the strikers all over the railway line, but specially at Gauhati, Chittagong and Barisal. Having talked to them freely, I have come to the conclusion, that the people did not fully realize the cost of their undertaking. But having embarked on the strike, they have endeavoured to suffer the consequences. It is always dangerous and uncharitable for an outsider to say, what he would have done if he had the handling of a situation. But if one may hazard an opinion, I think that the labourers were not ready for a philanthropic strike. In my opinion the labourers and artisans of India have not yet arrived at that degree of national consciousness, which is necessary for successful sympathetic strikes. The fault is ours. We, who have interested ourselves in national service, have not until recently studied the wants and aspirations of these classes, nor taken the trouble of informing them of the political situation. We have hitherto believed, that only those who had passed through high schools and colleges were fit to take part in national work. It is hardly therefore proper to expect the labouring and the artisan class all of a sudden to appreciate, and sacrifice themselves for, interests outside their own. We may not exploit them for political or any other ends. The best service we can render them and take from them at the present stage is to teach them self-help, to give them an idea of their own duties and rights, and put them in a position to secure redress of their own just grievances. Then and not till then are they ready for political, national or humanitarian service.

Any premature precipitation of sympathetic strikes must therefore result in infinite harm to our cause. In the programme of non-violence, we must rigidly exclude the idea of gaining anything by embarrassing the Government. If our activity is pure and that of the Government impure, the latter is embarrassed by our purity, if it does not itself become pure. Thus, a movement of purification benefits both parties. Whereas a movement of mere destruction leaves the destroyer unpurified, and brings him down to the level of those whom he seeks to destroy.

Even our sympathetic strikes therefore have to be strikes of

self-purification, i.e., non-co-operation. And so, when we declare a strike to redress a wrong, we really cease to take part in the wrong, and thus leave the wrongdoer to his own resources, in other words enable him to see the folly of continuing the wrong. Such a strike can only succeed when behind it is the fixed determination not to revert to service.

Speaking, therefore, as one having handled large successful strikes, I repeat the following maxims, already stated in these pages, for the guidance of all strike leaders :

1. There should be no strike without a real grievance.

2. There should be no strike, if the persons concerned are not able to support themselves out of their own savings or by engaging in some temporary occupation, such as carding, spinning and weaving. Strikers should never depend upon public subscriptions or other charity.

3. Strikers must fix an unalterable minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon their strike.

A strike may fail in spite of a just grievance and the ability of strikers to hold out indefinitely, if there are workers to replace them. A wise man, therefore, will not strike for increase of wages or other comforts, if he feels that he can be easily replaced. But a philanthropic or patriotic man will strike in spite of supply being greater than the demand, when he feels for and wishes to associate himself with his neighbour's distress. Needless to say, there is no room in a civil strike of the nature described by me for violence in the shape of intimidation, incendiarism or otherwise. I should therefore be extremely sorry to find, that the recent derailment near Chittagong was due to mischief done by any of the strikers. Judged by the tests suggested by me, it is clear that the friends of the strikers should never have advised them to apply for or receive Congress or any other public funds for their support. The value of the strikers' sympathy was diminished to the extent, that they received or accepted financial aid. The merit of a sympathetic strike lies in the inconvenience and the loss suffered by the sympathizers.

As to what should be done now for or by the strikers, who have in spite of threats and temptations manfully held out—and they are more than 50 per cent—I have already given my opinion to the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. And by that I wish to abide. If the strikers struck on the sole issue of sympathy for the outraged coolies at Chandpur and without intimidating their brethren, they had every moral right to do so, and they showed an unexpected measure of patriotism and fellow-feeling. I hope

that they will refuse to rejoin service, until the Government have fully and frankly apologized, and refunded to the parties concerned the monies paid for the repatriation of the coolies.

Mischievous Assiduity

There is a District Propaganda Committee at Barisal, which certainly deserves credit, if mere assiduity is any passport to credit. Experience, however, shows, that assiduity, when it is mischievous, commands not credit, but incurs discredit. Such, it seems to me, is the activity of the District Propaganda Committee of Barisal. It is avowedly against non-co-operation. When we reached Barisal, a registered letter was delivered to me containing certain questions for me to answer at the public meeting, that was to be addressed by Maulana Mahomed Ali and me. The questions were printed. They were delivered to me personally by hand also. I answered every one of the questions fully. The next day, to my surprise, I had a report of the answers presented to me for correction. The report was a caricature of my answers. Then followed a messenger, who handed me another batch of papers for reading and explaining. And yet up to today I do not know the author of these communications. They were all unsigned. I have never known such irresponsibility on the part of a public body. I was informed that the work was all done by Government officials, and therefore, at public expense. I missed in all this attention shown to me the slightest desire for enlightenment or attempt to convince me of my error. It would have been something, if the Committee had invited me and my companions to a discussion. It would have been still better, if being a public body it had taken advantage of our presence to bring the parties together. The only thing I discovered in this assiduous attention was an unholy desire to discredit the work of local non-co-operators. I read this activity in the light of what I have seen during my Bengal tour. There seems to me to be wilful and malicious misrepresentation of non-co-operation and non-co-operators. I find misrepresentation of my views. Sentences are torn from my speeches and distorted. The latest is the exploiting of the interview I had the privilege of having with the Poet. Fanciful and unauthorized reports have appeared in the Press. Whilst there was nothing secret about it, the interview has been considered to be a secret. It almost appears to be an attempt to divide us. But it must fail. The Poet is too great to be touched. Non-co-operators must resolutely refuse to believe anything that is imputed to him. There are differences of opinion between us. They do not affect my regard for the Poet in any

way whatsoever. The Poet is as good a lover of India as I claim to be, and that love is an all-sufficing bond between us. I must therefore resolutely refuse to be drawn into the controversy raging round the interview.

But to return to the questions. In spite of my feeling that the questions were mischievously put, I answered them, as I have said, at the public meeting. I do not propose to reproduce my answers here in detail. But the reader will find the questions themselves interesting and showing the manner of the precious [*sic*] propaganda.

[QUESTION:] 1. You have denounced political strikes. Your followers here have supported the steamer strike, and spent thousands of rupees from Congress funds in feeding the strikers. Is this right?

[ANSWER :] See my remarks on strikes.

2. Many hundred boys have left schools and colleges under your orders, and now spend their time, insulting and intimidating peaceful and law-abiding people. What is going to be the future of these boys? How will they earn their living?

If the boys are insulting and intimidating, it is wrong. I do not believe many of them are. The future of the boys is bright, in that they are now free. They will earn their living by the sweat of their brow. They can still receive and are receiving literary training.

3. You have condemned hartals. Your followers here have declared several hartals, and instigated the shop-keepers to refuse to sell goods to Government officers and loyalists. Do you condemn this?

I have never condemned all hartals. When there is a hartal, no one can be served. But it would be wrong to exclude from service special classes or persons. It is true that hartals should only be declared on the rarest occasions.

4. During the recent hartal the non-co-operators prevented the municipal sweepers from working for two days, stopped the water supply and caused great danger to the health of the people. Was this right?

I fear that the information contained in the question is at least partially true. We do not want to deprive our opponents of the necessary social services. They must be rendered to all, even as the sun gives his heat to all without distinction.

5. Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh, after his arrest for inciting the crowd to insult loyalists, said that there must be no water, light, or sweeper service in the town, and the place should be turned into a burning ground. Was he right or wrong in saying this?

I have since read Babu Sharat Kumar Ghosh's speech supplied by the Committee. There are passages in the speech, which bear the meaning sought to be put upon it. But from the glowing accounts I have received about Sharat Babu's very high character and spirituality, I must refuse to believe, that there is violence in Sharat Babu. I feel sure that if he has committed a slip, he will be the first person to acknowledge his mistake.

6. All these things were done in your name by persons who shouted *Gandhi Maharaj ki jai*. Do you approve of it? If not, how will you prevent your followers from doing such wrong in future?

My "followers", I hope, are assimilating the spirit of non-violence. But if it ever comes to pass that *they*, under cover of non-violence resort to violence, I hope to find myself the first victim of their violence, but if by a stroke of ill-luck or by my own cowardice I find myself alive, the snow-white Himalayas will claim me as their own.

7, 8 & 9 : Is there enough swadeshi cloth in the country to clothe the inhabitants? Will not the boycott of foreign cloth raise the price? Is not the price too high already? Will not this boycott cause great hardship to the poor and inevitably lead to *hat*[1]-looting, as happened before? Are not the inhabitants of Khulna in need of cloth already? Will this boycott help them? Is it right to burn cloth which might be given to relieve their distress?

Did not the Bombay mill-owners make vast profits from high price of cloth during the war because foreign cloth was scarce? If there is boycott now, will not they make greater profits? Is it right to take money from the poor and give it to the rich?

All great nations depend on foreign trade. If imports are stopped, exports will also stop and Indian traders will be ruined. Do you desire this?. Do you wish India to be a strong nation or a weak one?

These questions are either due to gross ignorance or malice. All these questions on swadeshi have been answered in these pages with sufficient detail. If the District Propaganda Committee will, instead of raising such questions, simply concentrate on multiplying spinning-wheels and looms, there will be enough cloth and to spare, for famines will practically be things of the past. Is it not a money famine in Khulna? If the people had money, they could get rice. They are able-bodied enough to work the wheel and the loom. Every one of them can by the spinning-wheel earn enough for food. Yes, indeed, the Bombay mill-owners did make profits before. But the present swadeshi scheme requires every province

[1] Bazaar

to manufacture its own cloth and spin its own yarn. Boycott of foreign cloth does not mean boycott of all foreign trade. India will certainly import what she requires for her growth, and export what she does not need. India cannot well be weaker or more helpless than she is today. Swadeshi, thank God, is removing that weakness.

> 10. How much of the crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund has been actually realized? How much only promised? How much already promised for schools, colleges, hospitals, charity, etc., and not really available for general purposes of swaraj? How much subscribed by Bombay mill-owners in hopes of reaping great profits from foreign cloth boycott?

The accounts of the Fund will be duly published. The framer of the question will be interested to know, that the Bombay mill-owners did not subscribe much. Only one, Maulana Haji Yusuf Sobani, gave a handsome sum, because he is a staunch non-co-operator and has given his son to the cause. The majority of the mill-owners gave nothing.

There is one thing I should add. I heard, whilst at Barisal, that Surendra Babu, when he went to Barisal, was hooted. I was deeply grieved to hear this. Non-co-operators cannot hoot anyone —not their worst enemy. Hooting after all is a form of violence. But to hoot Surendranath Banerjea[1] is to forget ourselves. We differ from him today. But we may not forget his past services. He was at one time the idol of Bengal. He gave voice to our sentiments. May we now hoot him? Surely, every leader who differs from us is not an enemy of the country. We may not attend his meetings. Having attended, we may even oppose him. But our opposition and dissent must be courteously and even respectfully expressed, especially when it is a veteran leader whom we oppose.

CHRISTIAN NON-CO-OPERATORS

A Christian student writes :

> Though we are Christian students, you are our national leader, and we feel that we ought to learn from you what India stands for and what is her spiritual heritage. Will you therefore send me your criticism of Western Christianity with constructive suggestions regarding organization, worship and ministry?

My inquirer did not know that he was taking me beyond my depth. It is a pleasure to me, however, that Indian Christians are

[1] 1848-1925; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress and its president in 1895 and 1902

taking growing interest in the national movement. I know, that hundreds of poor Christians in Bombay paid what they could to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. I know that several educated Christians are devoting their splendid talents to national work. I propose, therefore, to satisfy my inquirer—not in the way he would have me to—but in the only way I can.

India of the near future stands for perfect toleration of all religions. Her spiritual heritage is simple living and high thinking. I consider Western Christianity in its practical working a negation of Christ's Christianity. I cannot conceive Jesus, if he was living in the flesh in our midst, approving of modern Christian organizations, public worship or modern ministry. If Indian Christians will simply cling to *The Sermon on the Mount*, which was delivered not merely to the peaceful disciples but a groaning world, they would not go wrong, and they would find that no religion is false, and that if they act according to their lights and in the fear of God, they would not need to worry about organizations, forms of worship and ministry. The Pharisees had all that, but Jesus would have none of it, for they were using their office as a cloak for hypocrisy and worse. Co-operation with forces of Good and non-co-operation with forces of Evil are the two things we need for a good and pure life, whether it is called Hindu, Muslim or Christian.

WHAT TO DO?

I have dealt with the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali at length in a leading article[1]. Therein I have mentioned only those things which are absolutely indispensable for gaining swaraj during the year. But there are many other things which we can do to hasten the advent of swaraj.

For instance, title-holders can renounce titles, lawyers can suspend practice, grown-up students can leave schools and colleges and take to spinning, and councillors can resign their seats.

This is a war between religion and irreligion. We are therefore expected to give up drink, gambling and incontinence. Untouchability is Satan's device. We must give that up. Then there is swaraj even before the end of October. I look upon this arrest as God's gift. Let us make the best use of it.

WHAT NOT TO DO?

And just as these are so many things that each one of us can and should do, there are some things that we dare not do. We

[1] *Vide* "The Last Act?", 22-9-1921.

may not proclaim hartal. We may not burn public buildings, we may not kill anybody, we may not swear at anybody. We may not quarrel among ourselves, we may not be intolerant towards those who do not see eye to eye with us. Our tolerance will gain more recruits to our cause than our intolerance. "There is no compulsion in religion" is as true in the matter of "forcible conversions" to the doctrine of non-co-operation as to Islam. We must not fear anything and anybody except our weaknesses.

My Testimony

Friends are asking me, whether I do not consider it a breach of faith on the part of the Viceroy to have countenanced the arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali. I cannot accuse Lord Reading of a breach of faith, because his assurance as to waiving of prosecution was gratuitous. But it is certainly up to him to show clearly the new circumstances that have arisen since his Simla speech to justify Maulana Mahomed Ali's arrest. Of course, he did not expect the Maulana to seal his lips or to water down his speeches. The apology was an act of brave and fearless men. They expressed regret, if in a heated moment they had used an expression that might mean incitement to violence. I know the Brothers to be brave, honest and godfearing. Ever since the famous statement, Maulana Mahomed Ali has been travelling with me. He has made many speeches. But whilst he has been strong in every one of them, he has been careful to preach non-violence. His work on behalf of non-violence in private has been more solid still. The Brothers have been preaching the non-violence of the strong. They have practised what they have preached. The Government of Madras knew, that we were proceeding upon an errand of peace. They knew that Maulana Mahomed Ali was bound to preach Hindu-Muslim unity. His message would have reached the Moplahs, and their fanaticism might have received a check. If he had been permitted to go to the disturbed area, he would have ensured peace without the loss of a single drop of blood. But that would have irreparably damaged the prestige of the Government and demonstrated the triumph of non-violence.

Proof

If proof be wanted in support of my inference, it is supplied by the letter received by me from the Chief Secretary on my arrival in Madras. This is the text :

> In the event of your proposing to visit Malabar District, I am directed to inform you that the military authorities consider that the condition

prevailing in the area under martial law make it undesirable that you should enter or stay therein. In this view His Excellency the Governor-in-Council concurs. I am further directed to tell you that the military authorities have issued instructions, that should you go to the martial law area, you should be turned back.

The Government have hitherto credited me with good intentions. They have professed no distrust of my motives. Everybody has testified to the fact, that my presence has everywhere a peaceful effect. This prevention order—for order it undoubtedly is —forces upon me the inference, that the Government do not want peace, that they do not want exposure of the exaggerations indulged in their behalf, and what is the worst of all, they do not want to stop the second edition of the Punjab that is being enacted in unhappy Malabar.

The Crime of Wearing Khadi

I propose to give only one illustration of what I mean. Respectable young men have had their khadi vests and caps torn from them, and had to witness their being burnt. One man had his cap spat into, and was then forced to wear it. Is there here a change of heart or of methods? I have many other stories of atrocities. But I do not repeat them for want of verification. Even men, who were known to have prevented looting, etc., have been arrested, simply because they were Congressmen. So respectable a man as Mr. Keshava Menon of Calicut has been prevented from leaving Calicut. The order was served on him after my visit was announced. In what way could public safety be injured by Mr. Menon's leaving the disturbed area? From all the accounts I have received, Mr. Thomas, the author of the Malabar troubles, is copying Sir Michael O'Dwyer[1] without possessing the latter's frankness. Perhaps he is tongue-tied. I am doing him an injustice. The Governor of Madras has taken up the position of Lord Chelmsford. He leaves everything to his lieutenant.

Picketing and Love

A writer in the public Press indignantly asks : "How can I reconcile picketing with my doctrine of love? Is not picketing a form of violence or undue pressure?" It can be that certainly. It has been that in several cases, I am sorry to say. But it has been also an act of love, I know. Several sisters and young lads

[1] Lieut.-Governor of Punjab, 1913-19; responsible for Jallianwala Bagh tragedy

have gone on picketing purely out of love. Nobody has accused me of hatred against Marwaris. Nobody can possibly accuse Sheth Jamnalalji of hatred against his own caste-men and fellow-merchants. And yet both he and I are countenancing picketing of Marwari foreign cloth shops. When a daughter stands guard over her erring father, she does it purely out of love. The fact is, that there are certain acts that are common to all classes of men. And when they are not in themselves objectionable, the motive alone decides their quality. My own position becomes complicated by reason of my having to invite and rely upon the co-operation of those who are not all actuated by motives of affection.

Under Swaraj

Another writer, pointing to the Moplah outbreak, shows, that swaraj of the non-co-operator's dream can only be Moplah raj. I suggest a better inference. What the present Government in its essence is, is most forcibly brought home to us by the Moplah outbreak. Three things are absolutely clear :

1. In spite of all the most modern weapons of destruction at its disposal, the Government has not been able to protect life and property. It is no answer that they restored order after the event.
2. In spite of long rule the Government has criminally failed to make Moplahs peaceful citizens.
3. Whilst on the one hand they have failed to discipline Moplah valour and harness it for purposes of peace and God, they have taken no care to train the Hindus for self-protection from their lawless countrymen.

Non-co-operators have not yet attained swaraj. Whilst they may be charged with inability to have acquired control over all the forces of evil, they cannot honestly be credited with the happenings in Malabar. Assume that the non-co-operators fomented troubles, it was the duty of the Government to forestall them and prevent disorders. The clearest way of forestalling would have been to redress the wrongs on which non-co-operators have so successfully hung their theme.

It is however easy enough to say what swaraj would be like under non-co-operation regime. In the first place, no cause would be given for such grave discontent to the people. In the second place, Moplahs would have been brought under healthy influence, and thirdly, in the event nevertheless of outbreaks, peacemakers would have gone out at considerable risk to themselves to restore peace. The unequal contest such as is now going on would be impossible under swaraj.

"Malice Aforethought"

It is useful for governments to attribute previous malice to their critics. But in Madras I have come across a clear case of previous malice on the part of the Government. They have arrested the printer, the proprietor, the publisher and three editors of an article published in May last in a Tamil paper called *Deshabhaktan*. To an average reader the article is an exhortation to observe non-violence. The Viceregal declaration on the Ali Brothers' statement had led everyone to suppose, that there were to be no prosecutions for anti-Government writings, so long as there was no violence in them. But the fact of the prosecution does not much matter. It marks, let us say, a change in the policy. After all the Viceroy's was not a declaration to bind him for eternity. What is malicious is the prosecution of the innocent printer, publisher, proprietor and all the three editors. They could have found out the actual writer and punished him. If they did not know the writer's name, they could have called upon the declared editor to disclose the name of the writer. But under the pretence of prosecuting for alleged sedition, they wanted to stop the publication of an influential vernacular newspaper. If all the six men charged were to defend themselves, they might be discharged. That would not matter to the Government. Their object was to crush the *Deshabhaktan* by any means whatsoever. They have succeeded and are happy. I call this malice aforethought. The Press Act may go. But the spirit behind it abides.

The Congress Not a Show

I observe complaints about the wise action of the Reception Committee in limiting the issue of vistors' tickets to three thousand. In my opinion, even three thousand visitors are too many, if we wish to treat the Congress not as an annual show but a business assembly meeting year after year to settle the nation's programme for the ensuing twelve months. The limitation of the number of delegates presupposed a limitation of the number of visitors. It is impossible in an unwieldy assembly to carry on calm debates and take votes. I cannot therefore help feeling, that the Reception Committee was quite right in fixing a limit for visitors' tickets.

But this does not mean, that the annual gathering should lose its demonstrative character. The Reception Committee is therefore organizing lectures on popular subjects not only by the prominent Congressmen but also by other noted speakers. An instructive swadeshi exhibition is being arranged. There will be sacred concerts too for the spectators. I believe that the Committee is provid-

ing for one lakh of spectators. Every encouragement will be given to the people to visit Ahmedabad during the season, and adequate instruction and amusement will be provided for them without in any way interfering with the business part of the programme. Thus the ideal the Reception Committee has kept before itself is, by separating the business from the show, to emphasize both.

Repression in Sind

Here is a wire received from Sind which speaks for itself:

> Repression in Sind increasing. Public firm. On 24th August Maharaj Dwarka of Dadu was sentenced to one year's imprisonment. On 9th Maulvi Fatehali of Karachi got one year. On 3rd September Sheikh Abdul Majid got 2 years and Maharaj Vishnu Sharma, editor of the *Hindu* three years. Besides several pickets at Karachi and Sukkar have been sent to jail.

Besides this, I have cuttings from newspapers describing the horrible state of repression going on in that Province. I can only hope, that with the increase of repression there will also be an increase in the determination of the people to gain swaraj during the year. Not sacrifice so much as intelligence and hard work are wanted to complete our programme.

The Impassable Barrier

The existence of untouchability must remain an impassable barrier in the path of our progress, which we must break down with supreme effort. There seems to be a lurking thought with many of us, that we can gain swaraj and keep untouchability. They do not even see the contradiction inherent in the thought. Swaraj is as much for the "untouchable" as for the "touchable". A correspondent from Narayanavaram writes:

> In our parts *Panchamas* are very badly treated by the Hindus, especially the Brahmins. In the villages they are not allowed to go about the streets inhabited by Brahmins. They must stand at a considerable distance when speaking to Brahmins.

Read "Sahibs" for "Brahmins" and "Indians" for "*Panchamas*", and see how you feel. And yet I have no doubt, that some Sahibs are infinitely better than some Brahmins. God will not let us have swaraj so long as we treat a brother as an outcaste by reason of his birth. A man's karma is responsible for what he is, they say. But my karma does not compel me to throw stones at a sinner. Religion is made to uplift and not to keep a man crushed under the weight of his karma. It is a prostitution of the grand doctrine

of karma to consign a man of lowly birth to perdition. Rama felt privileged to find himself honoured by a fisherman. The Hindu religion is replete with illustrations of great men lifting their unfortunate brethren from their miseries. Will not the modern Hindus copy their own great men, and once for all rub out the blot of untouchability that so defiles Hinduism?

Young India, 22-9-1921

74. *"FRAUDULENT IMITATIONS"*

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

We beg to draw your attention to the matter published in the issue of the 18th August under the heading of "Fraudulent Imitations", and to request you to clear the ambiguity existing therein.

Although the Madras letter quoted by you in your above said issue only refers to "Khadi sold in Madras at from 10 to 15 annas per yard by the Bombay Swadeshi Stores", still, however, owing to the mention of the *Bombay Swadeshi Stores* therein, many of our customers inquire after it and ask for an explanation, as our Store is generally known by the name of "Swadeshi Stores" or "Bombay Swadeshi Stores."

It is quite clear to us, that the said letter does not concern us in any way, as we have neither a branch nor an agency in Madras, nor do we keep such stuff in our Stores; but to remove the doubt or misinterpretation from the mind of our customers and the public in general, we approach you with this hope and trust, that it will receive your immediate attention and you will be pleased to clear the point in your next issue.

Yours, etc.,
MANAGER,
THE BOMBAY SWADESHI CO-OPERATIVE STORES CO., LTD.

I gladly publish the foregoing. My note was certainly based on a complaint from Madras.

Young India, 22-9-1921

75. *THE LAST ACT?*

The much talked of arrest of Maulana Mahomed Ali took place at Waltair, whilst we were on our way to Madras. I am writing this in the train, just after writing out a few telegrams. The train halted at Waltair for over twenty-five minutes. Maulana Mahomed Ali and I were going outside the Station to address a meeting. Hardly had we gone a few paces from the entrance, when I heard the Maulana shouting to me and reading the notice given to him. I was a few paces in front of him. Two white men and half a dozen Indian police composed the party of arrest. The officer in charge would not let the Maulana finish reading the notice, but grasped his arm and took the Maulana away. With a smile on his lips he waved good bye. I understood the meaning. I was to keep the flag flying. May God help me to prove worthy of the message of a comrade with whom it was a privilege to work.

I continued my journey to the meeting place. I asked the people to remain calm, and fulfil the Congress programme. I then retraced my steps, and went where the Maulana was being detained. I asked the officer in charge whether I could see the Maulana. He said he had orders to let his wife and secretary only meet him. I saw Begum Mahomed Ali and secretary Mr. Hayat coming out of the detention room.

Waltair is a beauty spot in Andhra. It is a sanatorium. I envied the Maulana his arrest at such a lovely place. He was contemplating staying at Waltair a few days to rest and complete his accounts of the deputation. But the unexpectedly long stay in Bengal and the Moplah outbreak had rendered it impossible.

God had willed it otherwise. He wanted to give the Maulana enforced rest. And I know that he is happy in his detention.

Here is a copy of the warrant of arrest:

TO

F. E. CUNNINGHAM, ESQ.

DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE

C. I. D. AND RAILWAYS

MADRAS

Whereas Mahomed Ali is to be called on to show cause why he should not be bound over to keep the peace or to be of good behaviour for a period of one year under Sections 107 and 108 Cr. P.C., you are



YOUNG INDIA

WEEKLY

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A MANIFESTO.

In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for the reasons stated in the Government of Bombay Communique dated the 15th September 1921, we, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of every one to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government, whether in the civil or the military department

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion, that it is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government, which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as, for instance, at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks and other nations who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion, that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood.

M. K. Gandhi.
Abul Kalam Azad. (Calcutta)
Ajmal Khan. (Delhi)
Lajpatrai. (Lahore)
Motilal Nehru. (Allahabad)
Sarojini Naidu. (Bombay)
Abbas Taiyabji.
N. C. Kelkar.
V. J. Patel.
Vallabhbhai J. Patel. (Ahmedabad)
M. R. Jayakar. (Bombay)
D. V. Gokhale. (Poona)
S. G. Banker.
Jawahrlal Nehru. (Allahabad)
Gangadhar B. Deshpande. (Belgam)
Lakshmidas Tersi.
Umar Sobani.
Jamnalal Bajaj.
M. S. Ane. (Amroti)
S. E. Stokes. (Kotgadh Simla)
A. M. Ansari. (Delhi)
Khaliquzzaman. (Delhi)
K. M. Abdul Gafur. (Delhi)
Abdul Bari. (Lucknow)

Krishnaji Nilkanth. (Belgam)
C. Rajgopalachari. (Madras)
Konda Venkatappayya. (Guntur)
G. Harisarvottam Rao. (Guntur)
Anasuya Sarabhai.
Jitendralal Banerji.
Mushir Husen Kidwai. (Delhi)
Shyama Sundara Chakravarti. (Calcutta)
Rajendra Prasad. (Patna)
Azad Sobani. (Lucknow)
Hazrat Mohani. (Cawnpore)
Mahadeo Haribhai Desai.
Barjorji Framji Bharucha.
Yakub Hasan.
B. S. Munje. (Nagpur)
Jeramdas Dolatram.
M. R. Cholkar (Nagpur)
V. V. Dastane. (Bhusaval)
Ahmed Haji Sidick Khatri. (Bombay)
Gudgr Ramchandra Rao. (Andhra)
D. S. Vijayrao. (Lahore)
B. L. Subaramya. (Andhra)
Mia Muhomed Haji Janmahomed Chhotani.

hereby directed to arrest the said Mahomed Ali and produce him before me. Therein fail not.

J. R. Huggins
Dt. Magistrate

Vizagapatam,
September 14, 1921

Is it not funny, that he who has not only been himself peaceful but has endeavoured, and that successfully, to ensure peace among others and who has been a pattern of good behaviour, should be called upon by an insolent power to be "bound over to keep the peace and be of good behaviour"? A Government that is evil has no room for good men and women except in its prisons.

What has happened to the younger is bound to happen to the elder brother. They call themselves Siamese twins. They are inseparable. And if the one has misbehaved, the other undoubtedly has. I hope, that by the time this is in print, India would have learnt of the Maulana Shaukat Ali's arrest.

In imprisoning Maulana Mahomed Ali, the Government has imprisoned the Khilafat. For the two brothers are the truest representatives of the Khilafat. They cannot rest so long as the Khalifa remains practically a prisoner and their holy places virtually under non-Muslim control. The imprisonment of either or both means a flat refusal to recognize the Khilafat claim.

The Government will however find, that they have not succeeded in imprisoning the spirit of the Brothers, and that the Khilafat struggle will rage all the fiercer for their imprisonment. The spirit of the Brothers will live in every true Hindu and Mussulman who will keep the Khilafat flame steady and shining.

But the Brothers today stand for more than the Khilafat. They want swaraj and the redress of the Punjab wrong equally with the redress of the Khilafat wrong. They are too honourable to sell themselves even for securing the redress of the Khilafat wrong. To them the three are inextricably mixed up. It cannot well be otherwise, for to grant or to get the one is to grant or to get the other.

For me the imprisonment is a good omen. The Government were playing with the thing so long as they were arresting the rank and file. Every government that does not wish to yield to popular will is bound to arrest popular leaders and attempt to crush the popular spirit. With the Indian Government it has become the code of honour to arrest and imprison leaders and yield to popular will when there is no grace left in the giving.

This imprisonment therefore may safely be regarded as a preliminary to the establishment of swaraj. Only the swaraj parliament can unlock the jail gate, and relieve the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners with becoming honours. For this is a fight to the finish.

The best tribute we can pay the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners is to throw away all doubts, fears and lethargy. We have been doubtful as to the value of non-violence and swadeshi for attainment of our goal, and our ability to finish the programme within the year. We have entertained fear regarding our ability to undergo the necessary sacrifice, and we have been prosecuting our programme lazily. Let us imitate the courage, the faith, the fearlessness, the truthfulness, and the vigilant incessant activity of the Brothers, and we shall certainly attain swaraj. "Therein fail not" were the concluding words of the Magistrate's order. Well, the officer in charge "failed not"! Many an English officer, be it said to his credit, has lost his life in trying not to fail. The Congress and the Khilafat command, mandate, advice, whatever it may be called, is: "Therein fail not". Shall we, during the remaining period of grace, so work as to be able to report to the Congress, we have "failed not"? The orders are clear:

1. Be non-violent even under the greatest provocation.
2. Preserve Hindu-Muslim unity even under the severest strain.
3. Boycott the use of foreign cloth even though you may have to be satisfied with the merest loin-cloth and take to hand-spinning during every odd moment that can be spared.

When we have carried out these conditions, but not till then, are we ready to offer civil disobedience, that will compel obedience from the mightiest Government to a people's wish.

Young India, 22-9-1921

76. WANTED EXPERTS

Attacks on hand-spinning notwithstanding, I cling to the belief, that swaraj is unattainable without the beautiful art becoming universal in India. The reasoning applied to the proposition is incredibly simple. India cannot live unless her homes become self-supporting. They cannot become so, unless they have a supplementary occupation. It will, therefore, not avail if all our cloth was manufactured in our mills. If hand-spinning became universal, every home would get a share of the crores and without any

complicated machinery being necessary. And India is able to manufacture all her own cloth. It is understood, that when spinning becomes universal, the millions of weavers and lakhs of carders will revert to their original occupation.

This is the economic aspect of hand-spinning.

It will save our women from forced violation of their purity. It will, as it must, do away with begging as a means of livelihood. It will remove our enforced idleness. It will steady the mind. And I verily believe, that when millions take to it as a sacrament, it will turn our faces godward.

This is the moral aspect of spinning.

And when it has become universal and traffic in foreign cloth has become a thing of the past, it is the surest sign that India is earnest, sober, and believes in the non-violent and religious character of her struggle.

At present outsiders do not believe in our ability to boycott foreign cloth and to manufacture enough for our requirements by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But when it becomes an established fact, India's opinion, too, will become an irresistible force, and if necessary, she can then, but not till then, resort to civil disobedience in order to bend a recalcitrant Government to its will.

This is the political aspect.

Therefore I was sad to see, that in all Bengal I found no one who was a spinning-expert and who devoted his whole time and attention to nothing but spreading the gospel of hand-spinning, teaching, organizing and advising. I found, that the masses were ready to take it up but they did not know how to go about it. What is true of Bengal is perhaps true of most provinces. We should have in each province a standard charkha and a body of experts to whom one can refer for advice and guidance. Much splendid talent could be utilized, if there was expert knowledge available. Who is to decide upon the utility or otherwise of over fifteen inventions that were exhibited in the National College Hall at Calcutta? I saw everywhere different kinds of charkhas in use. But I saw no attempt to test the capacity of these wheels. Thousands are spinning today in Bengal, but there is nobody to measure their work. I therefore advise all Congress Committees to set apart at least six men and six women with faith in their mission in this direction. They need not look to Satyagraha Ashram for personal guidance. What can be given is being imparted through the special articles that are being published weekly in these pages. I ask those who would become experts to study them with careful attention. But no one need expect to become an expert by merely study-

ing those articles. Practice alone will make one perfect. Millions will spin for supplementing their resources, all will spin as a sacrament, some must spin for reducing it to a science. These latter must spin during the initial stage for eight hours per day. And as they spin on, they must match the quality of the yarn. They must measure every day their output and the exact time they have worked. They must learn the process of carding and weaving. They must know the different qualities of cotton, they must know the different types of wheels, and they must be able to execute ordinary repairs.

We will not attain swaraj, unless we have organized ourselves in a methodical, intelligent and co-operative manner. Swadeshi means non-co-operation in the second great department of national life.

We are boycotting because we are now ready for manufacture of our cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. But we will not be able to sustain the boycott, unless each one of us becomes a spinner during the transition period, and unless each province begins to organize its own production. This cannot be done if we have not a number of experts in each province.

Young India, 22-9-1921

77. *MESSAGE ON LOIN-CLOTH, MADURA*

September 22, 1921

Only a few days are left for us to complete the boycott of foreign cloth enjoined by the All-India Congress Committee. It is not yet too late if every Congress worker will devote his and her exclusive attention to the boycott. If everyone realizes that without swadeshi, i.e., boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of all the required cloth by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, there is no swaraj, and without swaraj there is no settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab problems, there should be no difficulty in bringing about the desired boycott and the required manufacture.

I know that many will find it difficult to replace their foreign cloth all at once. Millions are too poor to buy enough khaddar to replace the discarded cloth. To them I repeat my advice given on the Madras Beach.[1] Let them be satisfied with a mere loin-cloth. In our climate we hardly need more to protect our bodies during the warm months of the year. Let there be no prudery about dress.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Madras", 15-9-1921.

India has never insisted on full covering of the body for the males as a test of culture.

I give the advice under a full sense of my responsibility. In order therefore to set the example I propose to discard at least up to the 31st of October my topi and vest and to content myself with only a loin-cloth and a *chaddar* whenever found necessary for the protection of the body. I adopt the change because I have always hesitated to advise anything I may not myself be prepared to follow, also because I am anxious by leading the way to make it easy for those who cannot afford to change on discarding their foreign garments. I consider the renunciation to be also necessary for me as a sign of mourning and a bare head and a bare body is such a sign in my part of the country. That we are in mourning is more and more being borne home to me as the end of the year is approaching and we are still without swaraj. I wish to state clearly that I do not expect co-workers to renounce the use of vest and topi unless they find it necessary to do so for their own work.

I am positive that every province and every district can, if there are enough workers, manufacture sufficient for its needs in one month. And to that end for one month I advise complete suspension of every other activity but swadeshi. I would even withdraw pickets from liquor shops trusting the drinker to recognize the new spirit of purification. I would advise every non-co-operator to treat imprisonments as his ordinary lot in life and not think anything about them. If only we can go through the course of organizing manufacture and collecting foreign cloth during the month of October abstaining from all meetings and excitement, we shall produce an atmosphere calm and peaceful enough to embark upon civil disobedience, if it is then found necessary. But I have a settled conviction that if we exhibit the strength of character, the faculty of reorganizing and the power of exemplary self-control all of which is necessary for full swadeshi, we shall attain swaraj without more.

M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 23-9-1921

78. SPEECH AT THIRUPPATHUR

September 22, 1921

The citizens of Thiruppathur presented Mahatmaji with an address in Tamil and a purse. Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his reply said that in India twenty-two crores of people had no work for six months in the year and that if every house would have a spinning-wheel which could be worked for a few hours during leisure time by every member of the family, surely, then they would be able to supply the whole of India with swadeshi clothes adequately. Cotton grew more than what they required for the adequate clothing of thirty-two crores of people. Till that time when all Indians were able to get adequate supply of hand-woven and hand-spun clothes, they (the Indians) should be ready even to wear a *langoti* and go out. They should take pride in wearing hand-made clothes however coarse they might be. Mahatmaji then explained why he had changed his dress and said that he would wear only a little piece of cloth until that time when Indians rich and poor alike would be able to get adequate supply of clothes. Mahatmaji then said that he was immensely pleased to see in the address that the citizens of Thiruppathur had almost stopped drinking and wished that drinking should be completely stopped not only in that place but also in other places around Thiruppathur. He then exhorted them to accord an equal treatment to the *Panchamas*.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

79. SPEECH AT KANADUKATHAN

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses that have been presented to me now. But we cannot get swaraj by merely the presentation of purses and addresses. If you want swaraj and redress the Punjab and Khilafat grievances and the release of the Ali Brothers, you should take the swadeshi vow and discard all foreign clothes. Both men and women should do so. You should introduce spinning and weaving in every home. You should not take pride in your money, and those who are too poor should be satisfied with a mere *langoti* and no matter what the Government might do in giving us provocation, we should all be very patient and non-violent. We must have perfect Hindu-Muslim unity. Hindus

should cease untouchability. There is no warrant for untouchability in the Hindu Shastras. I am saying this as a *sanatani* Hindu who has lived for over forty years as a true Hindu. We must not drink or gamble. We should control our animal passions. If we do this, surely then we could have swaraj and redress to the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs and the release of the Ali Brothers.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

80. SPEECH AT KOTTAYUR

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for your address and purse. I shall thank you still more when you have discarded your foreign clothes. If you are not able to get enough khaddar cloth you should go about with a mere *langoti*.

Sisters, there were many like you in jail in South Africa with me. I don't want you to go to jail now. But I want you to spin yarn and discard all foreign cloth. You can colour it as you like. Unless we have swadeshi, unless we give up drinking, unless there is perfect peace in the country, unless you are able to control your animal passions and unless there is absolute unity between the Hindus and Muslims there is no swaraj.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

81. SPEECH AT DEVACOTTAH

September 22, 1921

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the addresses and purses presented to me just now. As I don't accept any costly gifts, your silver and gold plates will go to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Whilst I understand and appreciate your love and affection underlying all this, I must confess to you that they bring very little consolation. This beautiful hand-spun yarn and the fact that you have forty spinning-wheels running here from day to day gives me some consolation. But 40 spinning-wheels in a big place as this is like a drop of milk in an ocean. Just as there is a horse in every house here, so there should be a spinning-wheel in every house. And as *pravaschitta* for our past

sins, I expect every man and woman to spin for at least some time every day during leisure hours. I cannot be satisfied so long as I see that your dhotis are made of yarn from foreign countries. I promise you that if you wore the coarsest cloth as I wear you will be able to carry on your banking business well not only in India but also in Rangoon and other places. But if you wear fine garments for pleasure's sake and if you decline to wear garments hand-spun and hand-woven by our sisters, then there will be no swaraj for India. Your purses and addresses are good if your intention is to carry out swadeshi. But they are perfectly useless unless your purses and addresses are given as an absolute and final step towards attainment of swaraj and redress for the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs and the release of Ali Brothers. So, I hope that from tomorrow you will boycott all foreign clothes and use only hand-spun and hand-woven clothes. I hope also that there is no drink in your village. If there is, I hope you will drive away that curse. In Hinduism there is no such thing as untouchability and we are bound to treat our *Panchama* brothers as our own brothers. I see men here, as in Andhra, are fond of wearing diamond rings and ear-rings. I wish I could persuade you to return to your original simplicity and return all that to the Tilak Swararaj Fund—or to any other Fund you like. I thank you once more for your kindness in presenting to me these addresses and purses and conclude with the hope that you will all follow the programme of swadeshi.

The Hindu, 26-9-1921

82. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

September 23, 1921

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have not had a single letter from you after I came to Madras. As regards swadeshi, nothing has been done about it here. It is to be seen what can be done now. You must have noticed the great change I have introduced in my dress—I could bear the pain no longer.

Shri Rajagopalachari has no doubt put in great effort in Madras, but I have found Madras lagging behind even Bengal. I am now fed up with this wandering and these shouts [of victory]. I hope you are keeping fit. Please come to Bombay on the 4th if you can.

After the letter forbidding me to go to Calicut,[1] it is very easy for me to offer civil disobedience.

I am writing this letter on my way to Tinnevelly. Rajagopalachari is keeping very bad health. He has low fever, cough and asthma.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11415

83. INTERVIEW TO "DESHABHIMANI"

TINNEVELLY,
September 23, 1921

The following is an account of the interview between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. T. K. Madhavan, Editor, *Deshabhimani*, Quilon and a leader of the *Ezhava*[2] or *Tiyya*[3] community of Travancore at Tinnevelly.

T. K. MADHAVAN : Thank you Mahatmaji for having given me this opportunity of paying my respects to you. My community has been much benefited—morally much more than materially—by your charkha movement. Weaving and toddy-drawing are the two hereditary professions of my community. We supply the greatest part of labour in Malabar. Before you took up swadeshi and the boycott of foreign clothes other communities used to mock at us . . . The enthusiasm you have created for Indian-made clothes is partly responsible for the removal of social stigma attached to weaving. We are trying to push up weaving . . .

MAHATMAJI: Very glad you push up hand-weaving.

Total prohibition forms one of the chief items of our programme. Our Guru, His Holiness Brahmasri Narayana Guru Swami issued in August last year a birthday message advising us to cease all connection with liquor . . . . We are trying our best to see that tapping is stopped . . . . We are also instructing our people not to bid in the ensuing auction sale of shops by excise authorities. The Government of Travancore seems to be not a little agitated over our movement for stopping toddy drawing . . . .

It gives me very great pleasure to know that your Guru is advising people to follow temperance. I hope you will vigorously carry out his message.

[1] For the text of the letter *vide* "Notes", 22-9-1921, under the subtitle "Proof".

[2] & [3] Considered to be untouchables

We thank you that you have put removal of untouchability in the very forefront of your programme. So long as one-seventh of the population of India is branded as untouchables. . . you are quite right in holding that India cannot have complete swaraj.

Yes, I do hold that India cannot have complete swaraj so long as untouchability is not blotted out from India. Hence it is that I have put it down as the very first item in my programme.

We *Ezhavas* in Travancore are trying to remove the stigma of untouchability by getting all public temples thrown open to all classes of Hindus. . . . We take it as a matter of reforming Hinduism. . . . The removal of untouchability is an abstract idea. Temple-entry is a concrete representation of the abstract idea.

Removal of untouchability assumes a concrete shape when you demand temple-entry. On strategical grounds, I would ask you to drop temple-entry now and begin with public wells. Then you may go to public schools.

You seem to mistake our position in society for something analogous to that of *Panchamas* in British India. Except half a dozen schools including the one in Trivandrum situated just on the southern side of His Highness the Maharaja's Palace, all public schools in this state are open to us. . . .

You are ripe for temple-entry then.

A committee of officials and non-officials appointed last year by the Travancore Government has recently reported that a good number of temples in Travancore are maintained out of public funds and that it is the duty of the Government to continue to so maintain them. . . .

Well, it is a matter of civil right even here.

I was a member of the last session of Srimulam Popular Assembly. . . . Travancore High Court convicted some members of our community for entering and offering worship in a temple on the ground that our presence in the temple was "defiling" under Section 294 of T.P.C. . . . We have protested against that in the Popular Assembly and requested the Government to publish Proclamation abolishing untouchability as was done by the enlightened and patriotic Government of Japan. Nair Samajams have passed resolutions against untouchability. . . . This is the position of our agitation for temple-entry under the circumstances. What will Mahatmaji advise us?

I would certainly advise you to offer civil disobedience. You must enter temples and court imprisonment if law interferes. It is wrong to prevent you from entering temples on grounds of religion. You must keep strict non-violence. You must not go and

enter temples in masses. Go only singly. You must act with perfect self-restraint.

What is the attitude of the Congress in the matter? . . .The gist of Mr. Sankara Menon's[1] presidential speech was to the effect that he was not sure if the Congress Committee could take up the question without consulting the Congress authorities. . . .

If Mr. Sankara Menon said that Congress Committee could not take the temple-entry question, he is wrong.

A listener pointing to a gentleman who was seated also close by said, "This gentleman here is a *Nadar.*"

T. K. M.: Our position in Malabar society is on all fours with the position of *Nadars* in Tamil society.

LISTENER: Our Congress Committee has the same difficulty in our district. The majority of the people here object to *Nadars* being admitted into temples.

You are not to care what the bulk of the people think of it. Because the majority is against you, are you going to fly away from your principles?

T. K. M.: Will you please address the Congress Committee in Travancore on the subject?

Oh yes, gladly I will do that. To whom shall I write?

I think you had better write to Mr. C. Sankara Menon, B.A.,B.L.

Yes.

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji?

Yes, I am for caste.

Are you for caste, Mahatmaji, in regard to inter-dining and inter-marriage?

I am against both on hygienic and spiritual grounds. Eating is as dirty a business as evacuating, the only difference is evacuation is a matter of relief. You mix the rice you have to eat with curry. Would you treat it as a clean thing after a few minutes? Would you like to touch it even? It is not good to touch it on hygienic grounds. I will not inter-dine with another and I will not inter-dine even with my son. If one man says he will not inter-dine with another owing to repugnance, I oppose that. You must get rid of that repugnance.

What is your position in regard to inter-marriage?

[1] An erudite lawyer; president of the Quilon Congress Committee

I oppose that on spiritual grounds. Suppose you have to choose your wife from among the million women. You exercise your passion in respect of such a good number. If the extent of your choice is less, you restrict the exercise of your passion to that limited extent. You are benefited spiritually by curtailing the extent of your choice of women. It is better that you restrict your choice exclusively to your caste.

Suppose that a man of one caste falls in love with a woman of another caste and that woman reciprocates his love. Will you stand in the way of their marriage?

I will not stand between them and their marriage on grounds of non-violence. Suppose my son wants to marry my daughter. I will not stand in the way of their marriage. But one thing I will do. I will not allow them room under my roof.

The time being up, Mr. Madhavan requested Mahatmaji to give an authoritative statement of his opinion on temple-entry question. Immediately Mahatmaji wrote his opinion on a foolscap paper and handed it over to Mr. Madhavan. On reading that, Mr. Madhavan said: "Nothing is mentioned in this on the part the Congress party should take in the agitation." Then Mahatmaji added the following sentence to what was already written:

Asked whether the Local Congress Committee should help in the matter, of the rights of *Ezhavas* and others, Mr. Gandhi emphatically said that it was their duty to do so.

On reading this Mr. Madhavan asked: "Does it clearly state that the Local Congress Committee should take temple-entry as an item of their practical programme?"

Yes, it is clear on that point. The word "should" is there.

Mr. Madhavan wished good-bye and left his presence.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

84. *SPEECH AT TINNEVELLY*

September 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi who appeared in a single loin-cloth . . . delivered a stirring address which was translated then and there by Mr. T. R. Mahadeva Aiyar and by Dr. Rajan. . . .

FRIENDS,

I thank you for the address and the purse for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But more than for the address and the purse I wish to

thank you for the absence of any noisy demonstrations. I must confess to you that although these noisy demonstrations are a symbol of your affection and although behind them no mischief is meant they shake my nerves. And what with the repetition of these demonstrations and with the delicate condition of my body I have become totally unfit for these noisy demonstrations. If I had felt that these noises advance the cause of swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs in the least little bit I would not have minded them. But I know that for the great work that lies in front of us during the coming three months these noises are not only unnecessary but are harmful to the cause that is dear to you and me. If we are to gain swaraj, if we are to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs this year and if we are to receive the Ali Brothers and their associates, all our work must be silent, effective and determined. I therefore tender you my hearty congratulations and also to those leaders who have organized this great assembly upon complete absence of noise. And if all over India meetings of this character could be organized silently and expeditiously as this meeting has been I see everything that is hopeful in front of us. This deliberate, self-imposed and intelligent silence of ours is quite in keeping with our creed of non-violence. It is a matter of the keenest joy and the greatest satisfaction and for the deriving of the greatest hope that in spite of the arrest of the Ali Brothers India has remained calm and unperturbed. Any hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal in any part of India or even a universal hartal throughout the length and breadth of India would have been a clumsy demonstration and in my opinion, be nothing when compared with what the Brothers deserve. If we are worthy of their bravery, courage, faith, energy, love of religion and country what we need do is to follow them. We must adopt simplicity and khaddar even as these Brothers, who only a short time ago were indulging in pardonable luxuries; they have to wear heavy khaddar on account of their large build. We must realize as they have realized that swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs lie through our acceptance of the spinning-wheel in our homes and complete boycott of all foreign cloth and wearing only what we can manufacture in our own homes. I was therefore grieved to see a friend and fellow-worker of the satyagraha days coming to me and presenting me a rich garland of flowers, dressed in foreign cloth. I asked him why he was not dressed in khaddar and why he put on foreign garments all over his body. His sorry reply was that there was not sufficient khaddar. And it was in order to answer objectors of

this character you see me having reduced my garments to a single loin-cloth and Maulana Azad Sobhani having reduced himself to the minimum of garments required by Islam. Will you tell me now that you cannot get sufficient khaddar in your district even to provide yourself with a single loin-cloth? Yours is one of the richest cotton-growing districts of India. And for people of this district to say that they have not enough khaddar cloth to go round is like people who produce rich and sufficient wheat telling that they have not sufficient food. Hundred and fifty years ago practically every woman of India knew how to spin fine yarn and millions of Indians knew how to weave that beautiful yarn into cloth. And knowing as I do both cooking and weaving I can say that the art of weaving is easier than the art of cooking. If you want to get rid of the grinding slavery of centuries, if you want to help the Mussulmans to redress the Khilafat wrongs, if the Mussulmans here feel, as I have no doubt that they do, for the Khilafat, is it too much to think that you should insist on reducing your wants to a minimum and wear the simplest cloth. What we are about is not a matter of play but a matter of seriousness. The Nagpur Congress attended by 14,000 delegates from all parts of India was not joking with the country when it announced its determination to attain swaraj within this year and when it made a concrete programme insisting on swadeshi as an integral part of it. Hakim Ajmal Khan[1], in his old age, Dr. Ansari[2], Maulana Abdul Bari[3] and many other distinguished Mussulman countrymen of ours and Pandit Motilal Nehru, in his old age, having been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and C. R. Das enjoying a practice that was second to none in all India, were not joking when they adopted khaddar. Their wives are not joking when they also have adopted heavy khaddar just as heavy as you see myself, Maulana Saheb and Dr. Rajan are wearing and spinning from day to day as a sacrament. I would like every one present in this audience, men and women to consider it a point of honour to attain swaraj in this year and to believe like these distinguished countrymen of ours that swaraj is to be attained through the spinning-wheel. And if you mean business you will see to it that all the carpenters of this district are busy in making spinning-wheels and handlooms; you

[1] 1865-1927; eminent Muslim physician and politician who took a leading part in the Khilafat movement; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[2] M. A. Ansari (1880-1936); a nationalist Muslim leader; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

[3] 1838-1936; nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement and urged his followers to refrain from cow-slaughter

will see that all the weavers give up weaving foreign or even Indian mill-made yarn; you will also see to it that every home in this district has a spinning-wheel working for a definite number of hours every day. I believe in the capacity of the spinning-wheel to do all these things because it is a symbol of non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity; because I know that unless we are non-violent and believe in the efficacy of non-violence to cure all our ills we shall not be able to make the spinning-wheel a success. Just as I have mentioned to you the most potential thing we have to do, I am aware that there are some problems that stare the Hindus in the face and which require solution if we are to attain swaraj this year. You have your Brahmin and non-Brahmin question, the *Nadar* question and the question of the *Panchamas*. In my opinion all these questions resolve themselves into one, viz, untouchability. Claiming to be a *sanatani* Hindu as I do, I dare tell the whole of this audience that there is no provision for untouchability in the whole of our Shastras. I consider it, as a Hindu, to be sinful to consider that the touch of a human being can pollute me. I feel humiliated when anybody informs me that in your temples which you call the houses of God you deny admission to *Nadars*. The solution of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin problem seems to me to be incredibly simple. If my reading of the Shastras is correct, then in my opinion a Brahmin claims no privileges and sums up his life in four letters viz, "duty". It is his proud provilege to give all the posts of honour and emoluments to those who choose to take them. He remains supremely confident in the fact that his serving humanity with his knowledge entitles him to an honourable place in life. I have no doubt that if we are to win swaraj either this year or in hundred years to come we cannot get it unless the Hindus are united and are able to purge themselves of all dirt, error, superstition and sin. I would consider myself to be an unworthy partner of my Muslim companion if I could not compete with him in all that is best in Islam. So you will see that the whole problem resolves into two things, for both the Hindus and the Mussulmans, to follow the programme of swadeshi and bring about a complete boycott of foreign cloth, and for the Hindus alone to get rid of this curse of untouchability and all that it implies. The Ali Brothers and their associates do not desire to be released from the jails of this Government except through the first Act of a swaraj parliament. May God help you and me to fulfil the condition of swaraj during this year, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and to release Ali Brothers who are now in jail. I hope and I know

that you will extend the same patience that you have extended to me to the Maulana Saheb.

The Hindu, 27-9-1921

85. TO THE MUSSULMANS OF INDIA

MADURA,
September 24, 1921

DEAR COUNTRYMEN,

Whilst the arrest of Maulanas Shaukat Ali and Mahomed Ali has touched every Indian heart, I know what it has meant to you. The brave Brothers are staunch lovers of their country, but they are Mussulmans first and everything else afterwards. It must be so with every religiously-minded man. The Brothers have for years past represented all that is best and noblest in Islam. No two Mussulmans have done more than they to raise the status of Islam in India. They have promoted the cause of the Khilafat as no two other Mussulmans of India have. For they have been true, and they dared to tell what they felt even in their internment in Chhindwara. Their long internment did not demoralize or weaken them. They came out just as brave as they went in.

And since their release from internment, they have shown themselves true nationalists, and you have taken pride in their being so.

The Brothers have by their simplicity, humility and inexhaustible energy fired the imagination of the masses as no other Mussulman has.

All these qualities have endeared them to you. You regard them as your ideal men. You are therefore sorry for their separation from you. Many besides you miss their genial presence. For me, they had become inseparable. I seem to be without my arms. For anything connected with Mussulmans, Shaukat Ali was my guide and friend. He never once misled me. His judgment was sound and unerring in most cases. With the Brothers among us I felt safe about Hindu-Muslim unity, the value of which they understood as few of us have.

But whilst we all miss them, we must not give way to grief or dejection. We must learn, each one of us, to stand alone. God only is our infallible and eternal guide.

To be dejected is not only not to have known the Brothers, but it is, if I may venture to say so, not to know what religion is.

For do we not learn in all religions, that the spirit of the dear ones abides with us even when they physically leave us? Not only is the spirit of the Brothers with us, but they are serving better by their suffering, than if they were in our midst giving us some of their own courage, hope and energy. The secret of non-violence and non-co-operation lies in our realizing, that it is through suffering that we are to attain our goal. What is the renunciation of titles, councils, law-courts and schools but a measure (very slight indeed) of suffering? That preliminary renunciation is a prelude to the larger suffering, the hardships of a jail life and even the final consummation of the gallows if need be. The more we suffer and the more of us suffer, the nearer we are to our cherished goal.

The earlier and the more clearly we recognize, that it is not big meetings and demonstrations that would give us victory, but quiet suffering, the earlier and more certain will be our victory.

I have made your cause my own, because I believe it to be just. Khilafat, I have understood from your best men, is an ideal. You are not fighting to sustain any wrong or even misrule. You are backing the Turks, because they represent the gentlemen of Europe, and because the European and especially the English prejudice against them is due, not to the Turks being worse than others as men, but to their being Mussulmans and not assimilating the modern spirit of exploitation of weaker people and their lands. In fighting for the Turks, you are fighting to raise the dignity and the purity of your own faith.

You have naturally therefore chosen pure methods to attain your end. It cannot be denied, that both Mussulmans and Hindus have lost much in moral stamina. Both of us have become poor representatives of our respective faiths. Instead of each one of us becoming a true child of God, we expect others to live our religion and even to die for us. But we have now chosen a method that compels us to turn, each one of us, our face towards God. Non-co-operation presumes, that our opponent with whom we non-co-operate resorts to methods which are as questionable as the purpose he seeks to fulfil by such methods. We shall therefore find favour in the sight of God only by choosing methods which are different in kind from those of our opponents. This is a big claim we have made for ourselves, and we can attain success within the short time appointed by us, only if our methods are in reality radically different from those of the Government.

Hence the foundation of our movement rests on complete non-violence, whereas violence is the final refuge of the Government.

And as no energy can be created without resistance, our non-resistance to Government violence must bring the latter to a standstill. But our non-violence to be true must be in word, thought and deed. It makes no difference that with you non-violence is an expedient. Whilst it lasts, you cannot consistently with your pledge harbour designs of violence. On the contrary we must have implicit faith in our programme of non-violence, which presupposes perfect accord between thought, word and deed. I would like every Mussulman to realize, whilst the occasion for anger is the greatest, that by non-violence alone can we gain complete victory even during this year.

Nor is non-violence a visionary programme. Just imagine what the united resolve of seven crores of Mussulmans (not to count the Hindus) must mean. Should we not have succeeded already, if all the titled men had given up their titles, all the lawyers had suspended their practice and all the students had left their schools and all had boycotted councils? But we must recognize, that with many of us the flesh has proved too weak. Seven crores are called Mussulmans and twenty-two crores are called Hindus, but only a few are true Mussulmans or true Hindus. Therefore, if we have not gained our objective, the cause lies within us. And if ours is, as we claim it is, a religious struggle, we dare not become impatient save with ourselves, not even with one another.

The Brothers, I am satisfied, are as innocent as I claim I am, of incitement to violence. Theirs, therefore, is a spotless offering. They have done all in their power for Islam and their country. Now, if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are not redressed and swaraj is not established during this year, the fault will be yours and mine.

We must remain non-violent, but we must not be passive. We must repeat the formula of the Brothers regarding the duty of soldiers and invite imprisonment. We need not think that the struggle cannot go on without even the best of us. If it cannot, we are neither fit for swaraj nor for redressing the Khilafat or the Punjab wrong. We must declare from a thousand platforms, that it is sinful for any Mussulman or Hindu to serve the existing Government whether as soldier or in any other capacity whatsoever.

Above all we must concentrate on complete boycott of foreign cloth, whether British, Japanese, American, French or any other, and begin, if we have not already done so, to introduce spinning-wheels and handlooms in our homes and manufacture all the cloth

we need. This will be at once a test of our belief in non-violence for our country's freedom and for saving the Khilafat. It will be a test also of Hindu-Muslim unity, and it will be a universal test of our faith in our own programme. I repeat my conviction that we can achieve our full purpose within one month of a complete boycott of foreign cloth. For we are then in a position, having confidence in our ability to control forces of violence, to offer civil disobedience, if it is at all found necessary.

I can therefore find no balm for the deep wounds inflicted upon you by the Government other than non-violence translated into action by boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture of cloth in our own homes.

I am,
Your friend and comrade,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 29-9-1921

86. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKER PATTANI

TINNEVELLY,
September 24, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter[1] reached me here, having wandered from place to place. I am certainly glad that you wrote to me. You have the right to do so. Though I cannot claim to have understood you thoroughly I have known you for years as my well-wisher.

You put the greatest emphasis on the Prince's visit. I think your argument about the visit is the weakest. The Prince is coming here to uphold the prestige of the present Government. His visit now is uncalled for. I do not consider him as outside the Government. Nobody will oppose him as an individual, but he should have no quarter as the future head of the present system. Your quotations from our Shastras about loyalty can hardly apply here. What a great difference between Rama and Ravana!

But what you write about other matters does weigh with me. I do not at all want to lessen children's respect for their parents. However I do believe that such sad results as you

[1] In this private and confidential letter dated 12-9-1921, the addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to the danger-spots in the non-co-operation movement.

describe have followed. But this incivility is a transitory phase. Besides, just as a son should have respect for his father, the father also should have love for his son. But this also I do not find. The real malady is that both lack the religious spirit. Having said and admitted this, I may also tell you what I think about the matter. The people have on the whole benefited by our programme in regard to schools [and colleges].

I do not know anything about Shri Shukla's resignation.[1] I know Manilal[2] has a hot temper. I have been taking all possible measures in regard to such things. This is a grim struggle. I have plunged into it in the hope that in the end the people will become religious-minded. I feel immense joy when I see the beautiful transformation in the lives of many. At the same time, I am grieved to see that many have joined the fight just to feed their ego. But who am I [to judge others]? I am not at all worried, for I am carrying on the fight with a detached mind and trust that God will save me from all sins.

I remember your repeating to me the verse[3] which you have quoted. I keep it in mind and carry my burden. Will God blame me if the cart is broken or the rider unwary?

We shall discuss things if and when we meet.

I hope to go to Bombay on the 2nd.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 3176; also G.N. 5863

87. VICTORY FOR ALI BROTHERS

I interpret the arrest of the Ali Brothers as their victory; and their victory is ours for I see in it the dawn of swaraj. The moments of child-birth are unbearable for the mother. It is darkest before daybreak. The very word "break" suggests this.

I feel the same way about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Many others have been arrested, and many more will be arrested;

[1] Barrister D. B. Shukla had resigned from the Kathiawar Parishad owing to sharp differences with co-workers which came to the fore at Dhrangadhra where the Parishad was held.

[2] Manilal Kothari, a political worker of Gujarat

[3] तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान् कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् । "He who knows the truth of things should not unsettle the slow-witted who have not the knowledge"—*Bhagavad Gita*, III.29

but these arrests, although they are of consequence, cannot have the same significance as the arrest of the Ali Brothers.

The Ali Brothers did their best in the cause of swaraj. I am perfectly sure that their sacrifice is holy. They were completely faithful to their pledge to remain non-violent. This does not mean that their speeches were altogether free from harshness or bitterness, but they prevented violence. Preventing violence does not mean keeping the people quiet by suppressing facts; it really means remaining peaceful even after one has come to see that it is impossible to tolerate this Government.

The Brothers gave vent to their indignation, described the Government's black deeds for what they were, and yet, by example and by argument, taught people to remain peaceful.

Their non-violence is a matter of expediency. Unlike me, they do not accept it as an absolute principle at all times and in all situations; but, at this hour and in this situation, they accept, and have persuaded others to accept, non-violence to be the highest duty. If they had chosen, they could have killed some people or got them killed, though they might pay with their lives afterwards. They have shed all fear of death but, being practical and sincerely religious men, they realized that it is a crime to kill anyone in anger and this Islam forbids. They were convinced and could fully satisfy others that the present situation is not among those in which violence is sanctioned by Islam.

This is why I assert that they have fully kept their pledge to remain non-violent and are yet brave and dauntless. Their services (in the cause of) their religion and to society are beyond doubt. When fearlessness, daring and a spirit of dedication are found together, the sacrifice is supreme. Sacrifice always brings the fulfilment of one's cherished desire. I believe, therefore, that the moment of our victory has arrived, when we shall have swaraj and justice for the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

There are, however, certain conditions for this victory. The *yajna* performed by one person benefits another only if the latter accepts the *yajna* as his own obligation. Victory will not be ours unless we accept the Ali Brothers' *yajna* as our own. To do this means to act as they have done, to emulate their courage, their dauntlessness and their spirit of dedication. The Brothers are in jail; who will now lead the Khilafat movement?—if the Muslims take up this feeble attitude, it will mean that they have not understood the Brothers. No Hindu or Muslim should entertain the timid fear as to who will draw the chariot of swaraj after the Ali Brothers. We have very little need for leaders or guides now.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that there is no need at all. We know the path and have some experience of it. There are three essential conditions both for Hindus and Muslims : remaining peaceful, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi. These duties are equally obligatory on people of all religions. In addition, Hindus have to cleanse themselves of the stain of untouchability.

The Moplahs indulged in violence and invited destruction on themselves to no purpose. They have demonstrated that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be maintained if peace is not preserved. We should not, therefore, yield to anger or lose our balance, whatever the provocation on the part of the Government.

Hindu-Muslim unity is as much of a duty as preserving peace. Some Moplahs losing their heads does not prove that all Muslims are bad. Three years ago, Hindus had done the same thing at Shahabad. That did not prove all Hindus bad. Unity between two parties means that, even when there is a difference between them, they do not act as enemies but settle the dispute peacefully. We can say that, by and large, unity prevails in a family. That does not, however, mean that the members never quarrel. I do not doubt that we shall occasionally fall out while struggling to preserve unity. Even on such occasions, our leaders will restrain us. Hindu-Muslim unity would indeed have been endangered if Muslim leaders or the leaders of Moplahs had praised the latter's madness instead of condemning it. I do not, however, think that there is any Muslim who approves of the Moplahs' lunacy. I have not come across such a Muslim. However that may be, even a child can see that, if Hindus and Muslims fight among themselves, we are bound to need the services of a third party. Thus, Hindu-Muslim unity is the second imperative condition for swaraj.

An equally important condition for swaraj is swadeshi, which means the spinning-wheel. The latter symbolizes Hindu-Muslim unity, our peaceful intentions, our discipline, our industry and capacity for organization, our business acumen, our benevolence, our fellow-feeling for the poor and our desire to protect women. If the Hindus alone work the spinning-wheel, they will benefit, no doubt, but we shall not have swaraj. If we are angry and our blood is boiling, we cannot think of working at the spinning-wheel. The latter is an image of peace and gives us a sense of security about our livelihood. So long, therefore, as we do not have the spinning-wheel plying in every home, our desire for peace and our unity will not be demonstrated.

The loom, the carding machine and other implements are included in the spinning-wheel. If people start using them, India

will regain her light. In their absence, boycott of foreign cloth cannot be undertaken or, if undertaken, cannot be kept up. We seek mill-owners' help, we need the goodwill of importers of foreign cloth, but ultimately we have to rely upon ourselves. If we are sincere, the whole world is sincere. Nobody can ever cheat a sincere person. Hence, every one of us should boycott foreign cloth and engage himself in one or other process of cloth-making.

These, then, are the essential conditions for securing the release of the Ali Brothers. There are three of them but ultimately they are reducible to one, namely, swadeshi, since the first two are implied in it. Strict implementation of swadeshi will lead to swaraj and the first task of the sovereign parliament under swaraj will be to demand the release of the Ali Brothers and all others arrested for non-co-operation.

These are the conditions which apply equally to Hindus and Muslims.

If the Hindus do not understand the real spirit of their Hinduism, India will never get swaraj. It seems possible to me that the Khilafat issue may be settled without untouchability having disappeared, but unless it disappears we shall never get swaraj. If 22 crore Hindus suppress a fifth of themselves, it will not be swaraj, it will be *Ravanarajya*, it will not be dharma but the opposite of it. I am writing this article from Kumbakonam[1] in Madras Presidency. The town is well-known for its temples and it has learned Dravidians among its residents. The Brahmins of the place, however, feel themselves polluted if the shadow of a *Bhangi* falls on them! The *Bhangi* may even get a good beating, will certainly be visited with a torrent of abuse. The Dyerism of untouchability is nowhere else so rampant as in Madras. How dare an untouchable ever think of entering streets inhabitated by Brahmins! The untouchables are deliberately kept ignorant. If an animal becomes sick, someone may attend to it, but an untouchable has God alone to protect him. The groans of innocent untouchables are sufficient to keep swaraj away from us. In Madras Presidency, this problem is assuming an alarming character day by day. There is deep hostility between untouchable labourers and the rest and on occasion they even fight with one another. Love for untouchables, brotherly behaviour towards them and refusal to treat their touch as polluting will not only bring swaraj but also regenerate Hinduism. Hindus, who look upon cow-protection as a sacred duty, must not forsake the untouchables. We

[1] Gandhiji was in Kumbakonam on September 18, 1921.

shall be fit to chant the *mantra*[1] of swaraj only if we treat *Antyajas* as our own brothers even though they may be unclean or eat carrion or drink, even if in fact, they have in them all the defects to be found in the world.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

88. MARTIAL LAW

SERVED WITH A NOTICE

I received a letter from the Madras Government the day I reached Madras. It said:[2]

I have not sent any reply to this letter. What reply can I give? I should like to give only one : "I have read your letter. I cannot but go. You may do what you choose."

But how can I give such a reply? I have myself suspended civil disobedience and have asked others to do the same. In an atmosphere in which people do not know the difference between civil disobedience and criminal disobedience, how can a man in my position resort to civil disobedience all of a sudden? With these considerations in mind, I gave up the idea of sending a reply. I have in this way let slip an opportunity for winning swaraj which had presented itself to me, hoping that, in the months still left, people will grasp the full significance of civil disobedience and we shall be able to employ it without any fear and so win swaraj for all.

I am writing this article from Trichinopoly.[3] Here, I have been served with one more order, from Pudukkottai State. It is signed by some English official of the State. I had to pass through the territory of that State on my way to Chettinad. Fearing that even my passing through the State might have some influence on its subjects, the officer writes : "His Highness has come to know that you intend to pass through his territory. If you attempt to do so, the guards at the border will turn you back." I have sent a reply to this. "Received your letter. I certainly intended to pass through your territory but, in view of your letter, I shall take another route to Chettinad."

[1] Sacred rhyme

[2] For text, *vide* "Notes", 22-9-1921 under the sub-title "Proof".

[3] Gandhiji was at Trichinopoly on September 19, 1921.

I, however, regard these to be good omens. If we know how to use these opportunities, we can certainly win swaraj this year. The means, too, are quite easy. We should devote ourselves to our work and then welcome arrest if it comes. We are not yet fit to go to jail. We have not realized the value of swadeshi and the importance of the spinning-wheel. How many workers from amongst us ply it regularly with faith and as a matter of duty? How many have discarded all their foreign clothes? Even a blind man can see that the Government simply cannot tolerate boycott of cloth. It has been employing a variety of measures to deter us from such boycott.

Students giving up schools and colleges, lawyers giving up practice, drink-addicts giving up drinking—the Government certainly dislikes these things, but it may put up with them. It simply cannot tolerate swadeshi, however. The British came to our shores to trade in foreign cloth and rule the country to preserve this trade. Foreign cloth is the heaviest tribute being exacted from us. If we stop paying this, the Government will cease to be a ruler and will become a servant.

The end of September is nearing. I do not know what progress, even in Gujarat, boycott has made, and how many spinning-wheels are in use. I shall not be able to return to Gujarat before October. I hope that on my return I shall find khadi everywhere, on the persons of all men and women and in all homes, and shall see a spinning-wheel in every home.

The Khilafat wound is there, of course; the Punjab wound is still open; to these is now added the one in Malabar. I am sure that Gujarat can heal these wounds, if it so wills. It would not be an exaggeration to say that, to be a witness to its doing this, I have let go the auspicious opportunity of being in jail. This was one of the reasons for my forbearance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-9-1921

89. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

A close friend writes :[1]

The correspondent is a devout Hindu who believes in the need for Hindu-Muslim unity. Even then he has this fear. If it is felt by a person who is a firm believer in unity, what wonder if it is also felt by those who have always been sceptical about unity? I, therefore, think it advisable to answer these fears publicly. If we are growing more fearless day by day, it should be possible for us to discuss all our doubts publicly. I can clearly see that the fear expressed above betrays ignorance of the true meaning of non-violence, of Islam and also of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Those who accept non-violence as part of dharma are convinced that no hatred or violence can survive in its presence. If the Hindus in Malabar had the spirit of non-violence in them, no Moplah could have forced them to do anything. But, it will be objected, every one cannot have such a spirit, and the objection has force in it. The reply is that, even if a small section of Hindus display real non-violence, others will be protected—such is the power of non-violence. What is my reply, however, if somebody argues that Hindus do not believe in non-violence? Well if that is so, the question does not arise, for he who does not believe in non-violence will defend himself by fighting, whether he is alone or in a group. Anything which can be won through armed might can also be won through the power of non-violence. Even the person who fights with arms is considered brave only when he opposes a powerful enemy. One who believes in non-violence faces the enemy unarmed and his strength, therefore, has no limit to it. He who cannot safeguard his dharma is not worthy of it. Those who were forcibly converted, why did they submit to force? Why did they not give up their lives? Or, why did they not fight and beat back the enemy, or die fighting? If it was the Englishman's protection which saved them, they have as good as accepted the Englishman's religion; if my protection had saved them, they would have accepted my dharma. A dharma of their own, they had none. One's dharma is a personal possession. One is oneself

[1] The letter which is not given here expressed the correspondent's fear that success on the Khilafat issue might embolden fanatical Muslims to attempt forcible conversion of Hindus.

responsible for preserving it or losing it. What can be defended in and through a group is not dharma, it is dogma.

Islam does not sanction forcible conversion; it even prohibits the use of force. It is wrong to say that Islam has employed force. All those who profess a religion are not true followers of it. Does Hinduism sanction killing of Muslims for saving cows? No. Do we not know, even then, that Hindus lose their heads and fight with Muslims on this issue? If Islam recognizes the use of force, it is not religion but irreligion. I am positive that Islam does not sanction the use of force. If it did, would not all Muslims openly avow so? No religion in this world has spread through the use of force. In my opinion, the history of Muslim empires which is taught to us contains much exaggeration. Victory on the Khilafat issue will certainly increase the strength of Muslims and enhance their courage, but to think that they will use these against Hindus is to suggest that Muslims have no sense of honour, that it is in their nature to return evil for good, that, in other words, they have no true religion in them! All my experience is to the contrary. I have known honour and honesty in a great many Muslims.

Hindu-Muslim unity, however, does not mean that no Muslim or Hindu will ever make a mistake. If we remain unperturbed even if somebody makes a mistake, then only can it be said that unity is a living reality.

But let us think over this problem a little more. The Government does not forcibly cut off the tuft of hair on our head but has it left a soul in us? Compared to the violence of the Government, I think the violence of the Moplahs is not worth speaking of. The other day, in an instant a Government official had people stripped of khadi and thus, both Hindus and Muslims, of their dharma. Who deprived both Hindus and Muslims of their manliness? We simply do not have the strength to face the armed might of the Government. We were not reduced to such straits during the Mughal rule. I can right now devise methods of fighting the armed strength of the Moplahs with similar strength. Against the military might of the Government, however, I, though I pride myself on my knowledge of these matters, cannot discover a method of armed struggle, nor have the Ali Brothers succeeded in discovering any.

Moreover, the preservation of Hindu-Muslim unity depends upon the acceptance of peaceful methods by both the communities. Leaders of both communities must agree to settle their disputes exclusively through peaceful means, that is, through the good offices of arbitrators.

Finally, those Hindus who have been forcibly converted to

Islam ought not to be looked upon as Muslims or regarded as defiled; they have every right to be counted as Hindus. They stand in no need at all of going through purificatory rites.

I should also add that every Muslim who heard the stories of Moplah atrocities was pained by them, and also that, if our people were allowed to go there at this time, the Moplahs themselves would apologize for their deeds. I am sure that they will positively apologize when we have swaraj. All that they know is fighting. They are our ignorant brethren. The Government of course has done nothing to reform them but neither have we done anything. Is not this the fault of the Hindus of Malabar?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-9-1921

90. *MY NOTES*

Moplah Riots

There is no doubt that the Moplah riots have been a great set-back. In Madras Presidency, they are becoming sceptical about Hindu-Muslim unity. Many feel that people will not remain peaceful to the end. Others have been dazed. Not that they do not attend public meetings or take part in other activities; there is, however, widspread fear about how things will develop. Hundreds of Moplahs have been killed and the killing is still going on. As a result, the swadeshi movement has come to a stop in Malabar. That is what the Government wanted. The declaration of martial law has given an excellent opportunity to the Government to suppress the swadeshi movement. It is said that, with the declaration of martial law, khadi clothes worn by people were torn away and thrown into fire. Khadi caps, spinning-wheels, etc., were among the things burnt. The result was that khadi caps, and spinning-wheels, which used to be displayed in the shops of Calicut, had disappeared in one day. If the Moplahs had not turned mad these intolerable consequences would not have followed. If they had not indulged in killing and bloodshed, any officer who dared to burn khadi clothes today would have been dismissed or khadi would have become more popular; but the Moplahs' lunacy has produced the opposite result. They themselves knew nothing about swadeshi and the rest are a cowardly lot. These do not mind wearing khadi but they still do not have the strength to die. Hence, out of fear, they forsook khadi and

the spinning-wheel. We have an important lesson to learn from this. We wear khadi and put on a khadi cap as a matter of religious duty. It should be impossible for anyone, with threats and intimidation, to make us give them up. We ought to be ready always to lay down our lives for swadeshi and should display greater zeal for popularizing khadi.

All Honour to That Devoted Wife

I marvel at the courage displayed by the Begum Sahiba of Maulana Mahomed Ali. When she returned after visiting her husband who had been arrested at Waltair, I asked her if she was in any way afraid. She said she had no fear of any sort, that the arrest was to come and that her husband had done no more than his duty. I found no trace of nervousness in her tone. Even after the arrest, she has been touring with us and has kept up her courage. She attends both men's and women's meetings, wearing a *burka*, and makes brief speeches which go straight to the heart. She advises everybody to remain peaceful, to wear khadi and ply the spinning-wheel. She appeals to Muslims for contributions to the Smyrna Fund. Only a few months ago, her love for luxury knew no limit. She was very fond of fine cloth. Today she wears a green gown made of coarse khadi. A Muslim woman needs to wear many more garments than her Hindu sister, and the Begum Sahiba carries no light body. Even so, she submits to these hardships for the sake of her religion and country. As a result, Muslim sisters too come out everywhere so that they may have her *darshan*.

I find that the attire of Muslim sisters in the Madras Presidency is very plain. While there is no limit to the variety of colours in the costumes of Hindu women, in the attire of Muslim sisters I see nothing but white, rough cloth. This is a very holy sight to me. The variously coloured saris of Hindu women are disagreeable to me at the present hour.

Absence of Swadeshi

The use of swadeshi seems to have spread even less in the Madras Presidency than in Bengal and, among the women, one may say that it is practically nil. But I have been assured that efforts in this direction will be intensified now. Love for spinning has spread spontaneously among the poor. Merchants in Madras told me that the demand for foreign cloth in that part was very small and the sale of swadeshi goods had gone up very much. This may well be so. If it is, it is plain that the spread of swadeshi

owes little to the efforts of Congress workers and that the awakening has been spontaneous.

MADRAS LEADERS

The blame for this poor spread of swadeshi certainly lies with the leaders. And yet, the number of voluntary workers in Madras is by no means small, and Shri Rajagopalachari's ability and Dr. Rajan's devotion are of the highest. But these workers had to create a new climate, and they came up against many difficulties. The fact that they have not been deterred by the difficulties and are carrying on the work despite them is as surprising as it is gratifying. I have great faith in the Madras people's regard for dharma. The masses are as simple-hearted as in other provinces. Their capacity for hard work is unlimited. One cannot be certain, therefore, that Madras, which is in the rear today, will never be in the forefront. Madras has weavers in plenty and their skill is of the highest order. I met the chief workers among them at Kumbakonam. They have undertaken to use hand-spun yarn exclusively.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-9-1921

91. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25 [*1921*]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. Of course with me the burning[1] is not vital to the movement. One may be in it although one may not like burning. From Mahadev's talk, I gathered that probably you had begun to doubt the truth of the whole movement. I therefore wrote to you that even if you did, my affection for you would remain changeless and unaffected.[2] But naturally it consoles me to find that you believe in the movement as much as ever before. I do want to retain the co-operation of all the friends I can. At the same time I feel the truth of the movement so much that I shall be content even to stand alone and defend it. There is no other way of ridding ourselves of the worship of violence and all its offshoots.

I hope you will benefit by the voyage.

[1] Of foreign cloth
[2] *Vide* "Letter to C. F. Andrews", 14-9-1921.

Do please remember me to Mrs. Petit and Mr. Petit[1].

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

[PS.]

I have sent you a wire[2] today.

From a photostat: G.N. 955

92. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

ON WAY TO COIMBATORE,
Sunday [*September 25, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I have your letter accompanied by your letter to Urmila Devi. I did not get the earlier one.

Bengal did indeed depress me. But Madras did still more. I know that the real work is to inspire Congress workers themselves with faith in the spinning-wheel. I looked in vain for that in Bengal, as also here, and that makes me nervous. The masses have that faith, but they want backing, they want expert training. Everyone is there to exhort people to do the spinning, but none to do it himself. Such is our plight. What can we say about Sarup and Ranjit? But I think Jawaharlal will understand. It may not be long before I retire to the Ashram and attend exclusively to this work.

The degradation of India torments me so much, that if India refuses to be emancipated, resurrected by the end of the year, that torment may consume me. That is what I meant to say when I said I would not survive December, etc. Surely I have lost none of my faith. I am only puzzled when I trust to calculations of my intellect, and build on them. But in that dread hour the voice within whispers to me, "It is not thou, it is He who is doing it all." I then remember the dialogue of the tortoise and his mate, *mameru* and similar works and am myself again. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd proximo. I hope you will be there on the 4th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11419

[1] Sir Dinshaw Petit (1873-1933), member, Legislative Council, Bombay

[2] This is not available.

93. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

CHI. MANI,

Two letters from you are lying with me. Your work appears to be going on well. We shall meet there in a few days. Hence I write nothing about it.

I was much grieved to read what you write about Kumudbehn. I should certainly like to meet her. I shall positively be in Ahmedabad on the 6th. I do not know how long I may have to stay there; if, however, Kumudbehn goes to the Ashram while I am there, I can have a talk with her. I want to help her and bring her peace of mind. Even this letter you may send on to her.

I hope to arrive in Bombay on the 2nd. I shall have to stay there till the 4th.

Uncle Vithalbhai's way is quite different from ours. We need not worry about him. Let him do and say what he thinks fit.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

SHRI MANIBEHN PATEL
C/O SHRI VALLABHBHAI, BARRISTER
BHADRA
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–4: Manibehn Patelne

94. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

ON THE TRAIN,
September 25, 1921

BHAISHRI,

I read your postcard only now.

I could not send you the money. I shall now give it to you in Bombay. I shall arrive in Bombay on the 2nd October and will stay there till the 4th. I want you to be in Bombay while I am there.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI[1]
SHANTINIKETAN
BOLPUR
E. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2578

95. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, SALEM

September 27, 1921

I thank you sincerely for your beautiful address and the beautiful casket in which the address has been put. As you are aware, I have not anything to put silver plates and silver caskets into. The silver will therefore be devoted to public purposes. I congratulate the Salem Municipality on the record of progress which you have shown in your address. The more so, in that, your schools freely admit the *Panchama* children and that your Council contains a *Panchama* councillor. Nothing less can be expected of a place which has contributed to the Congress, its President[2] and one of its Chief Secretaries. You have told me that you are willing to do all that you can within the compass of your act. . . for non-co-operation. You have here mentioned the three chief things on which the attention of non-co-operators is concentrated

[1] Resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in July 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at Shantiniketan; later, co-author of his biography

[2] C. Vijayaraghavachariar

and if you add two more things, I think that you complete very nearly the programme of non-co-operation. I have not a shadow of doubt that your Act permits you to remain non-violent and to spread the gospel of non-violence throughout the Salem District or throughout your town and I am sure also that your Municipal Act does not prevent you from promoting Hindu-Muslim unity. Then the last two things and temperance can best be promoted by concentrating our attention upon swadeshi and though I see more progress in swadeshi in Salem than elsewhere in the Madras Presidency I am not at all satisfied for all you have done for swadeshi. I do not know whether the councillors have religiously carried out the gospel of swadeshi in their homes. I do not know whether the councillors have qualified themselves for swadeshi propaganda by becoming themselves accomplished spinners. I have a suspicion that in all your municipal schools you have not yet made spinning compulsory. I invite you to follow the example of the Municipality of Lahore for prescribing khaddar dress for all municipal employees, and you know what the introduction of spinning-wheel and khaddar means to your town. I assure you that it adds 25 per cent to the total income of the town. I know that you are a great weaving centre and if the Municipality will do its duty it can easily persuade the weavers not to touch the Japanese or any other foreign yarn and so you have a great programme of swadeshi which no act that can possibly be devised by the Madras Government can prevent you from following and you can copy the example of the Thana Municipality to undertake picketing liquor shops for yourselves and if you have sufficient funds you can devote, also like the Thana District Board, certain amount to the Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee for picketing liquor shops. After all, our movement is one of self-purification and searching self-respect. There are other ways in which we can perform both these processes and I feel sure that the Salem Municipality will not remain behind in self-purification and assertion of self-respect, and I thank you once more for your address.

The Hindu, 29-9-1921

96. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SALEM[1]

September 27, 1921

After addresses were read by the District Congress Committee, the Vannia-kula Kshatriyas and the Sowrashtra community, Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar was voted to the Chair. Mahatmaji . . . said that the more ill-advised the prosecution was, the more innocent the Ali Brothers were, the more successful would be our efforts to attain our goal by suffering. He said that the answer to the prosecution was a complete and immediate boycott of foreign cloth and the introduction of the spinning-wheel in every house. He then laid great emphasis on the removal of untouchability. As he understood the *varnashrama*[2] dharma there was no warrant for the doctrine of pollution by the touch of any human being. The *varnashrama* was a scheme of service and not a scheme of privileges. Evil thoughts, words and deeds polluted men and women, not the touch of any human being.

The Hindu, 30-9-1921

97. SPEECH IN REPLY TO MUNICIPAL ADDRESS, TIRUPATI

September 28, 1921

The Mahatma . . . told them that they should spread the gospel of swadeshi within their Municipality, introduce spinning-wheels in all their schools, promote temperance, take steps to get over the curse of untouchability and devise measures to combat famine. He said they could indulge in all these pleasures without infringing the Municipal Law.

The Hindu, 5-10-1921

[1] At Municipal Hostel ground

[2] The four castes and stages of life sanctioned by Hinduism

98. NOTES

AFFLICTED MADRAS

Madras is suffering from many afflictions. It has its Brahmin and Non-Brahmin problem, it has its *Panchama* problem, it has its labour problem, it has repression of a severe type such as is always to be met with where a Governor is amiable but hopelessly weak and dependent purely upon his advisers. The Chirala-Perala repression[1] I have already noticed. Now the Government is trying to exact from an unwilling peasantry a grazing tax which it can ill afford to pay. I understand that in its mad pursuit after collection, the Government impounded about 200 cattle, some of which were torn from their calves. The cattle were taken to a pound where there was neither sufficient water nor fodder. That took place in the Andhra country. Near Trichinopoly where I am writing these notes, there is a place called Karur with a population of about 20,000. Its people have done good work in the cause of temperance. Now about 40 persons, all members of the local Congress Committee, have been arrested for alleged complicity in an investment of a theatre by the rowdies of the place, consequent upon its manager's refusal to pay the subscription to a charity or to the Tilak Swaraj Fund—I do not know which. This investment took place some time ago. The crowd was dispersed. But now these men have been arrested. All over, there is talk of repression. And possibly there will be still more after the arrest of the Ali Brothers. The people however have kept calm, brave and non-violent. The Malabar trouble is out of the ordinary, but it has filled its cup of woe.

Panic has so far possessed the Government, that one does not know what they will do next moment. There is a Pudukkottai Raj near here. I had to go to a group of villages. I was to pass through the Raj on my way. Even this was too much for the Raj, and I received the following letter:

> We have reason to believe that you are intending to proceed on the 20th instant from Trichinopoly to Chettinad; we are further informed that you proposed to travel by road through this State.
>
> Assuming that this information is correct, I write to say that you will not be allowed to pass through this State. If you attempt to do so, you will be stopped at the frontier by the Police.

[1] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

I merely wrote as follows in reply:[1]

I regard everything that these States do as an indirect act of the Government. But as I consider them to be more helpless than the direct British subjects, I have always thought it necessary for non-co-operators not to give battle to them. It would create needless complications. But one cannot help noticing the insanity of refusing even a passage through a place. And what could I have done to the subjects of the State but preach on temperance, swadeshi and untouchability?

The "Panchamas"

But I must resist the temptation of dealing with the varied problems. As in all my Madras speeches, I have dealt most with the *Panchama*, i.e., the untouchables, problem, I propose to deal briefly with it in these notes. Nowhere is the "untouchable" so cruelly treated as in this Presidency. His very shadow defiles the Brahmin. He may not even pass through Brahmin streets. Non-Brahmins treat him no better. And between the two, the *Panchama* as he is called in these parts is ground to atoms. And yet Madras is a land of mighty temples and religious devotion. The people with their big *tilak* marks, their long locks and their bare clean bodies look like *rishis*[2]. But their religion seems almost to be exhausted in these outward observances. It is difficult to understand this Dyerism towards the most industrious and useful citizens in a land that has produced Sankara and Ramanuja. And in spite of the Satanic treatment of our own kith and kin in this part of India, I retain my faith in these Southern people. I have told them at all their huge meetings in no uncertain terms, that there can be no swaraj without the removal of this curse from our midst. I have told them, that our being treated as social lepers in practically the whole world is due to our having treated a fifth of our own race as such. Non-co-operation is a plea for a change of heart, not merely in the English but equally in ourselves. Indeed, I expect the change first in us and then as a matter of course in the English. A nation that can throw away an age-long curse in a year, a nation that can shed the drink-habit as we shed our garments, a nation that can return to its original industry and suddenly utilize its spare hours to manufacture sixty crores worth of cloth

[1] Not reproduced here; *vide* "Letter to Sidney Burn", after September 18, 1921.

[2] Seers

during a single year is a transformed nation. Its transformation must react upon the world. It must constitute even for the scoffer a convincing demonstration of God's existence and grace, and so I say, that if India can become transformed in this wise, no power on earth can deny India's right to establish swaraj. In spite of all the clouds that are thickening on the Indian horizon, I make bold to prophesy, that the moment India has repented for her treatment of the "untouchable" and has boycotted foreign cloth, that moment India will be hailed, by the very English officials who seem to have hardened their hearts, as a free and a brave nation. And because I believe, that if Hindus will, it is possible for them to enfranchise the so-called *Panchamas* and extend to them the same rights that they claim for themselves, and it is possible for India, if she wills, to manufacture all the cloth she needs even as she cooks all the food she eats. I therefore also believe that swaraj is attainable this year. This transformation cannot take place by any elaborately planned mechanical action. But it can take place if God's grace is with us. Who can deny that God is working a wonderful change in the hearts of every one of us? Anyway it is the duty of every Congress worker everywhere to befriend the untouchable brother, and to plead with the un-Hindu Hindus, that Hinduism of the Vedas, the Upanishads, Hinduism of the *Bhagavad Gita* and of Sankara and Ramanuja contains no warrant for treating a single human being, no matter how fallen, as an untouchable. Let every Congressman plead in the gentlest manner possible with orthodoxy, that the bar sinister is the very negation of ahimsa.

COBBLERS *v.* LAWYERS

Babu Motilal Ghosh, whose mind is fresh like that of a youth though he is too frail even to move, summoned Maulana Mahomed Ali and me chiefly to urge us to invite the lawyers to the Congress fold and in effect to restore them to their original status of unquestioned leadership of public opinion. Both the Maulana and I told him, that we did want the lawyers to work for the Congress, but that those who would not suspend practice could not and should not become leaders. Moti Babu said, that my mention of cobblers in the same breath as lawyers had offended some of them. I felt sorry to hear this. I remember the note[1] in these pages, and it was certainly not written to offend. I have said many hard things about lawyers, but I have never considered them to be

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 25-8-1921, under the sub-title "Practising Lawyers".

guilty of caste prejudices. I am sure, that the lawyers have appreciated the spirit of my remark. I hope I am never guilty of putting a sting in any of my writings. But I certainly meant no offence in the paragraph referred to by Moti Babu. Having been myself a lawyer, I could not so far forget myself as wantonly to offend members of the same profession. Nor can I forget the brilliant and unique services rendered to the country by lawyers such as Pherozeshah Mehta[1], Ranade[2], Taiyabjee[3], Telang[4], Manmohan Ghose, Krishnaswami Iyer, not to speak of the living ones. When no one else had the courage to speak, they were the voice of the people and guardians of their country's liberty. And if today the majority of them are no longer accepted as leaders of the people, it is because different qualities are required for leadership from what they have exhibited hitherto. Courage, endurance, fearlessness and above all self-sacrifice are the qualities required of our leaders. A person belonging to the suppressed classes exhibiting these qualities in their fulness would certainly be able to lead the nation; whereas the most finished orator, if he have not these qualities, must fail.

And it has been a matter of keen satisfaction to me to find the lawyers all over India, who have not been able to suspend practice, readily assenting to the proposition and being content to work as humble camp-followers. A general will find his occupation gone, if there were no camp-followers in his army.

"But", said Moti Babu, "there is a great deal of intolerance that has crept into our movement. Non-co-operators insult those lawyers who have not suspended practice." I fear that the charge is true to a certain extent. Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit. Arrogant assumption of superiority on the part of a non-co-operator who has undergone a little bit of sacrifice or put on khadi is the greatest danger to the movement. A non-co-operator is nothing if he is not humble. When self-satisfaction creeps over a man, he has

[1] 1845-1915; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress; twice elected President in 1890 and 1909

[2] Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901); economist, historian and social reformer; one of the founders of Indian National Congress; became judge of Bombay High Court in 1893.

[3] A nationalist Muslim leader from Gujarat; former judge of Baroda High court; was one of the commissioners appointed by the Sub-committee of the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders.

[4] Of the Bombay High Court; one of the founders of the Indian National Congress

ceased to grow and therefore has become unfit for freedom. He who offers a little sacrifice from a lowly and religious spirit quickly realizes the miserable littleness of it. Once on the path of sacrifice, we find out the measure of our selfishness, and must continually wish to give more and not be satisfied till there is a complete self-surrender.

And this knowledge of so little attempted and still less done must keep us humble and tolerant. It is our exclusiveness and the easy self-satisfaction that have certainly kept many a waverer away from us. Our motto must ever be conversion by gentle persuasion and a constant appeal to the head and the heart. We must therefore be ever courteous and patient with those who do not see eye to eye with us. We must resolutely refuse to consider our opponents as enemies of the country.

Lawyers and others who believe in non-co-operation but have not, from any cause, been able to non-co-operate in matters applicable to them, can certainly do silent work as lieutenants in the matter of swadeshi. It requires the largest number of earnest workers. There is no reason why a practising lawyer should not make khadi fashionable by wearing it even in courts. There is no reason why he and his family should not spin during leisure hours. I have mentioned one out of a variety of things that can be done by practising lawyers for the attainment of swaraj. I hope, therefore, that no practising lawyer and for that matter no co-operating student will keep himself from serving the movement in every way open to him. All cannot become leaders but all can be bearers. And non-co-operators, I hope, will always make it easy for such countrymen to offer and render service.

A Pertinent Question

I paraphrase below what a friend writes regarding the influence of the Moplah outbreak on Hindu-Muslim unity:

> I am a staunch believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. But this Moplah outbreak has raised doubts in me. Success in the Khilafat means strength to Islam. Strength to Islam means attempts at conversion. Have we not often been given the choice between Islam and the sword? Can people such as the Moplahs learn the beauty of non-violence? And even if they appreciate non-violence for the sake of their faith, will they not use violence for the sake of spreading their faith? My belief in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity is there. But do you not think that the questions I have raised are relevent?

The questions are indeed relevant, if only because they have occurred to one so sane as the writer is. But in my opinion there is a misunderstanding about the whole question. Our advocacy of the Khilafat would be wrong if Islam were based on force. There is nothing in the Koran to warrant the use of force for conversion. The holy book says in the clearest language possible, "There is no compulsion in religion." The Prophet's whole life is a repudiation of compulsion in religion. No Mussulman, to my knowledge, has ever approved of compulsion. Islam would cease to be a world religion if it were to rely upon force for its propagation.

Secondly, historically speaking, the charge of conversion to Islam by force cannot be proved against its followers as a body. And whenever attempts have been made to convert by force, responsible Mussulmans have repudiated such conversions.

Thirdly, the conception of Hindu-Muslim unity does not presuppose a total absence for all time of wrong by any of the parties. On the contrary it assumes, that our loyalty to the unity will survive shocks such as the forcible conversions by Moplahs, that in every such case we shall not blame the whole body of the followers but seek relief against individuals by way of arbitration and not by way of reprisals.

Fourthly, acceptance of non-violence for organizing India's freedom involves acceptance of non-violence for Hindu-Muslim solidarity. The Moplahs have certainly broken the rule. But they were prevented from having access to the new manifestation. Whilst they had heard something about the Khilafat vaguely, they knew nothing of non-violence.

Fifthly, we need not suspect any evil befalling India under swaraj; for it is tolerably certain, that had the Congress and the Khilafat workers been permitted to penetrate the Moplah territories, they would have been able to nip the evil in the bud. As it was, it is a matter capable of proof that the Khilafat workers, wherever they could go, were able to exercise great restraining influence. To me the Moplah madness is proof of the Hindu-Muslim solidarity, because we kept calm. As members of a family, we shall sometimes fight, but we shall always have leaders who will compose our differences and keep us under check.

Sixthly, in the face of possibilities of such madness in future, what is the alternative to Hindu-Muslim unity? A perpetuation of slavery? If we regard one another as natural enemies, is there any escape from eternal foreign domination for either of us? Is not the present domination worse than the possibility of forcible

conversions or worse? Is Hinduism worth anything, if it cannot survive force? Cannot the Mussulmans too ask the same question as the friend has asked? Is there no possibility of a repetition of pillage and murder on the part of Hindus as happened in Shahabad three years ago? Is not the remedy therefore clearly Hindu-Muslim unity at all hazards? The Hindus as also the Mussulmans, whenever one of them goes mad, have two courses left open. Either to die valiantly without retaliation, that will at once arrest the progress of mischief; or to retaliate and live or die. For individuals both the courses will abide as long as the world lasts. All questionings arise, because we have become helpless. We have forgotten the divine art of dying for our faiths without retaliation, and we have equally forgotten the art of using force in self-defence at the peril of our lives. And Hindu-Muslim unity is nothing, if it is not a partnership between brave men and women. We must trust each other always, but in the last resort, we must trust ourselves and our God.

The Proper Spirit

A friend, in reply to a letter asking her to dedicate herself more fully to swadeshi, writes:

> When I think of the little work that I have done all these months, I cannot help my tears. I wish I could open my heart to show you what is in it. In your first letter you asked me to take up this work in a religious spirit, and I can assure that I have taken it up as my religion. In my heart I have never been able to separate religion and patriotism. For me both are one. . . . We profess to be many things, but when we come to self-analysis, we find we are nothing. . . . We have lost all our capacity of feeling. We do not feel sufficiently the pangs of slavery. . . . Otherwise how can people be so indifferent, while time is flying so swiftly?

It is not possible for me to share the whole of the beautiful letter with the reader. I have simply quoted as much as I could dare, in order to induce the readers, both men and women, to copy the religious zeal of this sister, who, the reader may be informed, is rendering patriotic service in her own sweet and selfless way.

A Brave Woman

Whilst I am sharing with the reader my enjoyment of woman's work in the cause of the country, I must not deny myself the

pleasure of recounting my experiences of Begum Mahomed Ali. She began, last time we were in Bombay, to assist her husband publicly in his work. She commenced with collections for the Smyrna Fund. She joined us in our arduous and incessant travels in Bihar, Assam, and East and West Bengal. She began to speak at women's gatherings. And I could perceive, that she had gifts of eloquence no less than her brave husband. Her speeches lost nothing in effect for brevity, and I do not know that she could not give lessons to her husband in the art of saying as much as possible in as few words as possible. Let the reader know, that Begum Sahiba was dressed from head to foot in heavy khadi, and a Mussulman sister has to wear many more articles of dress than her fortunate Hindu sister. She retained the orthodox veil. It would be a mercy, if some Mussulman divine were to find out authority to enable women public workers to discard the *purdah*, especially when the veil too has to be of khadi. Anyway she bore herself bravely even in the melting climate of Assam.

Her greatest trial and triumph came, when at Waltair her husband was torn away from her. I saw her, as she came out of the room where her husband was detained. She walked along the platform with a steady step. And when I asked her whether she was not happy that her husband was at last arrested, she replied without a tremor that she was, because he was going to jail for his God and his country. The reader is already familiar with the brave words with which she sped her husband on his journey. We continued our journey to Madras. There was a vast public meeting on the Beach. The audience was totally unfamiliar to her. She attended the meeting, and spoke in her sweet Hindustani in a loud voice without faltering. And as sentence after sentence was rolling out of her lips, I could not help saying to myself that she was the brave wife of a brave husband. I felt proud of her as a companion in our journey. Here is a free rendering of her speech:

> My Hindu and Mussulman brothers and sisters, I am glad to be able to tell you that I am not sorry for my husband's arrest. I have asked him to be happy in his imprisonment, and I have promised to carry on his work to the best of my ability. I hope that both my Hindu and Mussulman brothers will ceaselessly work and attain swaraj. If you want to see Maulana Saheb released early, you should all wear khadi, all my sisters should spin daily for the sake of our religion and our country. In the place of Maulana Saheb, there should be many coming forward to serve Islam and India. I must also ask the Mussulman brothers here to contribute as much as they can to the Angora Fund.

Well Done Nagpur

The Municipality of Nagpur certainly deserves congratulations for its public service, in that it has taken a referendum on total prohibition. The result is striking. Two thousand three hundred and forty-three voters registered their votes. Of these two thousand three hundred and thirty-two recorded their votes in favour of total prohibition. Six voted with reservations, and only *five* voted against prohibition. The reader will be pained to find, that of the five voters against prohibition two were graduates. It is possible to look at the revelation in another light, and say that the two graduates had the courage of their conviction to incur popular odium and vote in accordance with their conscience. There is no doubt as to the educative value of such a referendum. I wish, the Secretary of the Congress Committee at whose instance the poll was taken, had given the full strength of the electoral roll. It is to be hoped, that other municipalities would follow the example of Nagpur.

Young India, 29-9-1921

99. *TAMPERING WITH LOYALTY*[1]

His Excellency the Governor of Bombay had warned the public some time ago, that he "meant businesses", that he was no longer going to tolerate the speeches that were being made. In his note on the Ali Brothers and others he has made clear his meaning. The Ali Brothers are to be charged with having tampered with the loyalty of the sepoy and with having uttered sedition. I must confess, that I was not prepared for the revelation of such hopeless ignorance on the part of the Governor of Bombay. It is evident that he has not followed the course of Indian history during the past twelve months. He evidently does not know, that the National Congress began to tamper with the loyalty of the sepoy in September last year, that the Central Khilafat Committee began it earlier and that I began it earlier still, for I must be permitted to take the credit or the odium of suggesting, that India had a right openly to tell the sepoy and everyone who served the Government in any capacity whatsoever, that he participated in the wrongs done by the Government. The Conference at Karachi merely repeated the Congress declaration in terms of Islam. Only a Mussulman divine can speak for Islam, but speaking for Hinduism and speaking for nationalism, I have no hesitation in saying, that it is sinful for anyone, either as soldier or civilian, to serve this Government which has proved treacherous to the Mussulmans of India and which has been guilty of the inhumanities of the Punjab. I have said this from many a platform in the presence of sepoys. And if I have not asked individual sepoys to come out, it has not been due to want of will but of ability to support them. I have not hesitated to tell the sepoy, that if he could leave the service and support himself without the Congress or the Khilafat aid, he should leave at once. And I promise, that as soon as the spinning-wheel finds an abiding place in every home and Indians begin to feel that weaving gives anybody any day an honourable livelihood, I shall not hesitate, at the peril of being shot, to ask the Indian sepoy individually to leave his service and become a weaver. For, has not the sepoy been used to hold India under subjection, has he not been used to murder innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh, has he not been used to drive away innocent

[1] This was one of the articles for which Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

men, women and children during that dreadful night at Chandpur, has he not been used to subjugate the proud Arab of Mesopotamia, has he not been utilized to crush the Egyptian? How can any Indian having a spark of humanity in him and any Mussulman having any pride in his religion feel otherwise than as the Ali Brothers have done? The sepoy has been used more often as a hired assassin than as a soldier defending the liberty or the honour of the weak and the helpless. The Governor has pandered to the basest in us by telling us what would have happened in Malabar but for the British soldier or sepoy. I venture to inform His Excellency, that Malabar Hindus would have fared better without the British bayonet, that Hindus and Mussulmans would have jointly appeased the Moplahs, that possibly there being no Khilafat question there would have been no Moplah riot at all, that at the worst supposing that Mussulmans had made common cause with the Moplahs, Hinduism would have relied upon its creed of non-violence and turned every Mussulman into a friend, or Hindu valour would have been tested and tried. The Governor of Bombay has done a disservice to himself and his cause (whatever it might be), by fomenting Hindu-Muslim disunion, and has insulted the Hindus, by letting them infer from his note, that Hindus are helpless creatures unable to die for or defend their hearth, home or religion. If however the Governor is right in his assumptions, the sooner the Hindus die out, the better for humanity. But let me remind His Excellency, that he has pronounced the greatest condemnation upon British rule, in that it finds Indians today devoid of enough manliness to defend themselves against looters, whether they are Moplah Mussulmans or infuriated Hindus of Arrah.

His Excellency's reference to the sedition of the Ali Brothers is only less unpardonable than his reference to the tampering. For he must know, that sedition has become the creed of the Congress. Every non-co-operator is pledged to preach disaffection towards the Government established by law. Non-co-operation, though a religious and strictly moral movement, deliberately aims at the overthrow of the Government, and is therefore legally seditious in terms of the Indian Penal Code. But this is no new discovery. Lord Chelmsford knew it. Lord Reading knows it. It is unthinkable that the Governor of Bombay does not know it. It was common cause that so long as the movement remained non-violent, nothing would be done to interfere with it.

But it may be urged, that the Government has a right to change its policy when it finds, that the movement is really threat-

ening its very existence as a system. I do not deny its right. I object to the Governor's note, because it is so worded as to let the unknowing public think, that tampering with the loyalty of the sepoy and sedition were fresh crimes committed by the Ali Brothers and brought for the first time to His Excellency's notice.

However the duty of the Congress and Khilafat workers is clear. We ask for no quarter; we expect none from the Government. We did not solicit the promise of immunity from prison so long as we remained non-violent. We may not now complain, if we are imprisoned for sedition. Therefore our self-respect and our pledge require us to remain calm, unperturbed and non-violent. We have our appointed course to follow. We must reiterate from a thousand platforms the formula of the Ali Brothers regarding the sepoys, and we must spread disaffection openly and systematically till it please the Government to arrest us. And this we do, not by way of angry retaliation, but because it is our dharma. We must wear khadi even as the Brothers have worn it, and spread the gospel of swadeshi. The Mussulmans must collect for Smyrna relief and the Angora Government. We must spread like the Ali Brothers the gospel of Hindu-Muslim unity and of non-violence for the purpose of attaining swaraj and the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

We have almost reached the crisis. It is well with a patient who survives a crisis. If on the one hand we remain firm as a rock in the presence of danger, and on the other observe the greatest self-restraint, we shall certainly attain our end this very year.

Young India, 29-9-1921

100. SPEECH AT BELLARY

October 1, 1921

After the addresses were read, Mahatmaji replied in Hindi. He regretted that no address had been given to him by the Khilafat Committee. He did not know whether a Khilafat Committee was in existence or not. If there was one he regretted the omission. He stated that he had received innumerable letters from Bellary about local differences amongst *vakils*, councillors, Hindus and Mussulmans. Until there was concord and peace, there could be no Congress work and so he appealed to all to merge their differences and unite. With regard to the differences about Andhra and Karnatak questions, Mahatmaji stated that it may be taken up after swaraj was obtained. He appealed to the people to take to the charkha and manufacture of khadi. He regretted that the response from Bellary in the matter of suspension of practice was poor, nay, practically nil. He thanked the people for having come and welcomed him in such large numbers, though it was midnight.

The Hindu, 3-10-1921

101. MY LOIN-CLOTH[1]

[*October 2, 1921*]

All the alterations I have made in my course of life have been effected by momentous occasions; and they have been made after such a deep deliberation that I have hardly had to regret them. And I did them, as I could not help doing them. Such a radical alteration—in my dress,—I effected in Madura.

I had first thought of it in Barisal. When, on behalf of the famine-stricken at Khulna, I was twitted that I was burning cloth utterly regardless of the fact that they were dying of hunger and nakedness, I felt that I should content myself with a mere loin-cloth and send on my shirt and dhoti to Dr. Roy, for the Khulna people. But I restrained my emotion. It was tinged with egotism. I knew that the taunt was groundless. The Khulna people were being helped, and only a single zemindar could have sent all the relief necessary. I needed therefore nothing to do there.

The next occasion came when my friend Maulana Mahomed Ali was arrested before my very eyes. I went and addressed a meeting soon after his arrest. I thought of dispensing with my cap and shirt that moment, but then I restrained myself fearing that I might create a scene.

The third occasion came during my Madras tour. People began to tell me that they had not enough khadi to start with and that if khadi was available, they had no money. "If the labourers burn their foreign clothing where are they to get khadi from?" That stuck into my heart. I felt there was truth in the argument. The plea for the poor overpowered me. I expressed grief to Maulana Azad Sobhani, Mr. Rajagopalachariar, Doctor Rajan and others, and proposed that I should thenceforth go about with a loin-cloth. The Maulana realized my grief and entirely fell in with my idea. The other co-workers were uneasy. They felt that such radical change might make people uneasy, some might not understand it; some might take me to be a lunatic, and that all would find it difficult if not impossible, to copy my example.

For four days I revolved these thoughts, and ruminated the arguments, I began telling people in my speeches: "If you don't

[1] First published in Gujarati in *Navajivan*, 2-10-1921. Its translation in *The Hindu* was reproduced from the *Independent*.

get khadi, you will do with mere loin-cloth but discard foreign clothing." But I know that I was hesitating whilst I uttered those words. They lacked the necessary force, as long as I had my dhoti and my shirt on.

The dearth of swadeshi in Madras, also continued to make me uneasy. The people seemed to be overflowing with love but it appeared to be all froth.

I again turned to my proposal, again discussed with friends. They had no new argument to advance and September was very nearly closing. What should I do to complete the boycott before the close of September? That was what was for ever troubling me.

Thus we reached Madura on the night of the 22nd. I decided that I should content myself with only a loin-cloth until at least the 31st of October. I addressed a meeting of the Madura weavers early next morning in loin-cloth. Today is the third day.

The Maulana has liked the idea so much that he has made as much alteration in his dress as the *Shariat* permits. Instead of the trousers, he puts on a *lungi*, and wears a shirt of which the sleeves do not reach beyond the elbow. Only at the time of the prayers, he wears a cap, as it is essential. The other co-workers are silently watching. The masses in Madras watch me with bewilderment.

But if India calls me a lunatic, what then? If the co-workers do not copy my example, what then? Of course this is not meant to be copied by co-workers. It is meant simply to hearten the people, and to make my way clear. Unless I went about with a loin-cloth, how might I advise others to do likewise? What should I do where millions have to go naked? At any rate why not try the experiment for a month and a quarter? Why not satisfy myself that I left not a stone unturned?

It is after all this thinking that I took this step. I feel so very easy. For eight months in the year, you do not need a shirt here. And so far as Madras is concerned, it may be said that there is no cold season at all, and even the respectable class in Madras wears hardly anything more than a dhoti.

The dress of the millions of agriculturists in India is really only the loin-cloth, and nothing more. I have seen it with my own eyes wherever I have gone.

I want the reader to measure from this the agony of my soul. I do not want either my co-workers or readers to adopt the loin-cloth. But I do wish that they should thoroughly realize the meaning of the boycott of foreign cloth and put forth their best effort

to get it boycotted, and to get khadi manufactured. I do wish that they may understand that swadeshi means everything.

The Hindu, 15-10-1921

102. *TO WOMEN*

[*October 2, 1921*]

DEAR SISTERS,

I have been thinking all this time about the kind of message I should send to you on my birthday, which falls today. What interest can our sisters have in my birthday? What is the reason that they know me? Pondering on this question, I feel that they do so because they recognize my love for them. They know that I value their honour and that I have shown the best means of safeguarding it. This means is swadeshi. In following swadeshi, women can do much more than men. When, in the past, the daughters of India spun and clothed themselves and others, India may have been poor but she was not as abject as she is today. It is plain to me that today the women in the country are unable to preserve their virtue as they could do in the old days. I, therefore, once again put before them the same idea.

All women should devote at least one hour daily to spinning. Realizing that simplicity is dharma, women should regard themselves adorned through it, regard as sacred whatever quality of cloth is produced from yarn spun by girls and wear such cloth for the purpose of covering their bodies.

I see, too, and I want women as well to see, that this is the only way to win swaraj.

The best way to show our regard and affection for a person is to follow his example.

My aim in everything which I ask my countrymen to do is to revive the *satyayuga*[1].

Our first task in the country is to educate women. Education will help them to safeguard their virtue. For doing this what we require is not much erudition but strength of character.

The love you have shown me today encourages me to ask you to show love of another kind by resolving to bring back the *satyayuga*. India is certainly capable of defending herself. If we decide to use exclusively cloth made in India we shall in a very short time

[1] The age of truth

have ensured strong protection for the country. That is why I am trying to popularize the spinning-wheel. It enables women to safeguard their virtue. There is no other occupation which will help millions of our women to spend their time usefully sitting at home. To ply a spinning-wheel does not require much of intelligence either. The country should learn to be self-reliant. It will be so when it has brave men and brave women. The courage we should display is of the kind required in satyagraha, which is superior to the courage of arms. If we can do this, we are bound to be free. Save the millions of rupees which are drained out of the country and protect your sisters.

If you are convinced that the work I am asking you to do needs to be done, come forward, for the sake of the country, to take it up.

1. Go among the poor and, wherever you find people suffering for want of food and clothing, introduce the spinning-wheel, banish hunger and help people to become self-supporting.

2. Wherever you find the surroundings very dirty, women and children disease-ridden and the general state one of moral laxity, the people should be provided with the means for a sober, clean, healthy and pure life and, in this way, be made aware of their present condition and ways of living.

3. Wherever you see the need for efforts to spread knowledge and a desire to undertake such efforts, you should provide the necessary means and should, yourselves, work actively.

For this work, it is first necessary to cultivate self-purification, that is, spiritual growth, sisterly regard for others and intellectual humility.

There is, thus, an excellent and fruitful field of work for the Bhagini Samaj[1], if the Samaj would take it up. The field is so large that, if it does solid work, seemingly bigger tasks will count as nothing by comparison and great service will have been rendered to the cause of Home Rule without the phrase being so much as even mentioned. In the past, when there were no printing presses and few facilities for public speeches, when we could cover 24 miles in as many hours instead of a thousand as now, there was only one effective means of propagating ideas, namely, one's work. Today, we rush from place to place with the speed of air, deliver speeches and write articles, and yet we find it almost impossible to persuade people to act as we want them to. From every direction we hear words of despair. To me it is

[1] A social service organization of women in Bombay

clear that, as in the past, so in the present too we shall not succeed in impressing the people with speeches and writings as effectively as we can with work. It is my humble prayer to the Bhagini Samaj that it should attach the first importance to quiet work.

It is a huge waste if, from all these books which people read, nothing is put into practice. Try, therefore, to act upon at least an ounce of what you read in books rather than attempt to read a ton-load of them.

I do not want to name the many sciences there are in the world, but it is safe to believe that you have grasped the meaning of any science to the extent that you put it into practice.

It is not proper that we pay no attention to acting on the numerous pledges that we take. Any pledge once taken should be scrupulously kept, at the cost of one's life if necessary.

Let your life be governed by high ideals. In Rome, the ideals themselves changed, but in India we have still not forgotten ours. Whether Hindus or Muslims, we are all heirs to our forefathers. We can hope to preserve that heritage only by constantly fixing our attention on high ideals of life. With our forefathers, aspiration for goodness was the central motive of their life, but it seems to have vanished from us. Wherever we turn, we find hypocrisy. We have got into the habit of resorting to lies in every small matter. We must root that out and fill our lives with truth.

Your humble brother,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-10-1921

103. DHARMA OR "ADHARMA"?

I invariably start and prick up my ears when, at times, even well-wishers or others who believe in non-co-operation come out with difficult questions and tell of their bitter experience. What follows is the gist of a letter from a friend who has been moved to write out of love. He has the country's good at heart, and is no coward. Dharma is dear to him, while his experience of human nature is considerable. I give here in my own words the substance of his letter as far as I can recollect it.

> While no one questions your intentions and your means too are clean, would you say that what you advocated with regard to students was altogether wise? Is it possible to be

certain that your action will not have unhappy results? To me at any rate these results are visible even today. In trying to teach the spirit of freedom, we have lost domestic discipline. Filial regard on the part of children seems to have disappeared. What boots it to gain swaraj if domestic sanctities are to be its price? Is the spinning-wheel the proper thing for a child? He may do as he pleases later in life. If children disobey their parents, they cannot but lose their dharma.

It is understandable that you should have faith in your non-co-operators, but is it not likely that you are being deceived? Do you really believe that everyone is as sincere as you are? I for one see many around who are selfish, vain and hypocritical. I am sure you would not be happy to discover that you had lost the sincere men and retained only irresponsible people around you. How I wish I could lend you my eyes to see that all that glitters is not gold!

It is in the hope that you may win in the end that I have voiced these misgivings and encroached upon your time.

The original letter is even more simply and politely written than I have been able to suggest. Such letters, manifestly prompted by love, always make me wonder whether the ordinary restraints of civilized life are being violated.

Some children have possibly become rude. But, then, if the *Gita* has been used to justify the throwing of bombs, why be surprised at misconstruction of my words? I am sure, however, that the movement of leaving schools has had on the whole happy results. The original idea was sound. I am firmly of the view that it is a sin to attend schools run by this Satanic Government. Children under the age of 16 were not called upon to join this movement, while those above 16, surely, have the necessary discretion to decide for themselves.

But I always wonder if parents today have a proper understanding of their own duty. What would be the duty of children whose parents are morally depraved? When parents are dissolute and vice-ridden, what is the right course for growing sons and daughters to follow? What course should the children of slaves adopt?

We should not be surprised if in these matters the consequence of too narrow an interpretation of domestic sanctities are unfortunate. Should the children of parents subsisting on bribery agree to being supported with such riches or should they renounce them? Simply because some Hindu parents may have forsaken their dharma, should the children follow suit?

We shall have, in this age, to set a limit to our filial devotion as much as we do to our loyalty to the State.

In a place where the king is dissolute and harasses his subjects, where he enjoys all luxuries and comforts at the expense of the people, where, instead of being a protector of his subjects he has become a parasite on them—if loyalty to such a king is not a sin, then what is called virtue must be a sin. In the past, devotion to a king meant devotion to a king like Rama, not to one like Ravana. It is understandable that at the instance of Dasharatha Rama should readily take himself to the wild forest, but Prahlada accepting the gift of kingship from Hiranyakashipu would mean the eclipse of dharma.

You may swim in your father's well but it does not mean you may also drown yourself in it.

At no stage of our struggle has the youth of the country been encouraged to adopt an attitude of licence. Only those young men who were disciplined and could endure suffering were advised to leave Government schools and colleges even though they might be getting useful knowledge in them. There are many who continue in schools to please their parents. Only a few have left schools in defiance of their parents' wishes, and of these, fewer still have subsequently taken to undisciplined ways.

There is in this world no dearth of men who in the name of conscience really gratify their selfish desires. Such men will of course bring discredit to dharma, but should that stop us from so much as talking about conscience? I am absolutely certain that by placing the spinning-wheel in children's hands I have done the highest service to the country. I look upon the spinning-wheel movement as of lasting importance. In concentrating on the training of children's minds to the exclusion of everything else, we have done them a great wrong. A considerable portion of our lives is taken up in trying to provide the body's needs. We have committed a great sin in neglecting education in the use of the means which help us to meet these needs. The country will be happy only if this education is taken up again. By using the spinning-wheel as an instrument of vocational training, which in this case is our duty, we serve several purposes at the same time.

The second misgiving of our friend causes me concern. Dharma would get a bad name and people would come to harm if this sacred struggle is vitiated by hypocrisy. In that case people would fight shy of the very name of dharma or be content to accept orthodoxy as dharma.

Some undesirable elements must admittedly have found their

way into our struggle, and I know that there are hypocrites who, under the cover of non-co-operation, are out to serve their selfish ends. But I do not think that hypocrisy has taken possession of the movement. Should that happen, our condition would be even worse than it is today because it would nurse our cowardice. Hypocrisy flourishes only where there is fear. The fear of the consequences of sin tempts the cowardly sinner to resort to a pretence of virtue and thus he becomes doubly a sinner. In order to hide his godlessness, so that he may fill his belly, he makes a big show of piety and not only wastes sandalwood[1] but adds to his sins. Whatever is humanly possible to keep such persons out of the struggle has, I feel, been done, and it is with this consideration that I have retained my freedom to act as I think best in the last resort. The moment I see hypocrisy all round me, I shall unhesitatingly flee the struggle. Hypocrites cannot be non-co-operators and it is the service of the latter I have accepted.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-10-1921

104. MY NOTES

PEOPLE OF MADRAS

My tour of Madras was something of a disappointment. I am a great admirer of the people of Madras. Memories of the pleasant experience I had with them in South Africa are still fresh in my mind. I have often seen their great capacity for suffering. But in the matter of swadeshi Madras lags behind. I see that their women remain the least touched by swadeshi. And yet, an awakened Madras can do much. In contrast to the smartness of the women in Madras, Gujarati women stand nowhere. The former are highly intelligent. No other Indian women are as deft with their hands. Women there have the ingenuity to make the most worthless-looking thing pay.

It is not that Madras is lacking in workers either. Very few of our workers have the wisdom, the integrity and the ability of Shri Rajagopalachari. He has fully understood the meaning of our struggle and, in a moment of crisis, he can be resolute and patient.

How is it, then, that Madras disappointed me? I think there are two reasons for this. In the first place, so deep has been the

[1] Paste of sandalwood is applied to the forehead as a mark of piety.

influence of the English language on the region that a person in Madras who knows English cares very little for Tamil. The Bengalis too love English, but that has not made them give up Bengali. In fact, hardly any other Indian language except perhaps Urdu has been able to produce the quality of literature that Bengali has, so well has it been cultivated. Tamil in Madras has been as good as given up, with the result that not only has Tamil not prospered, but there is a wide gulf separating the English-knowing section from the Tamil-speaking class. Shri Rajagopalachari and his colleagues are making every effort to bridge the gulf, but this will take some time.

The other important reason for my disappointment is that, their genuine regard for dharma notwithstanding, people in Madras have allowed blind religious orthodoxy to take such complete possession of them that mere outward forms of religion remain and the inner spirit has vanished. The *Antyajas* in the region suffer more indignities than they do in almost any other part of the country. The Brahmins are more sharply separated from the Non-Brahmins than anywhere else. And yet no other region makes such abundant use of sacred ash, sandalwood paste and vermilion powder. No other part of the country has quite so many temples and is so generous in providing for their maintenance. As a result of this, on the one hand the educated people are getting increasingly estranged from religion and becoming more cynical in consequence, and, on the other, total darkness and ignorance prevail among the orthodox.

In such a case, however, once the darkness has disappeared, light is not delayed. As soon as the ordinary people are convinced of the darkness that is within them, it will vanish by itself.

That is why I see rays of hope even in the midst of gloom. Congress workers tell me that, without any effort on their part, the people have taken up the spinning-wheel. Khadi is being produced even in places where they have done no work and thousands have started wearing khadi caps. The majority of the Congress workers wear khadi exclusively. If I am asked what conclusion I have reached from my experience in Madras, I would say that despite this experience, I have not given up hope of winning swaraj before the year is out.

He who fights from a sense of dharma never despairs. If one's ends are clean and one's means are pure, one ought to be confident of success. Only when such a person fails to achieve his end within the expected time will he say: 'There must have been some error in my calculation, but I am sure of success along this path.'

GUJARATIS IN MADRAS

Wherever I see Gujaratis I observe that they are bringing credit to Gujarat. At every place they mix with the local population as much as they can. They readily contribute what is expected of them and try to spread the message of non-co-operation to the best of their ability. Everyone whom I ask has a good word for them. They keep out of local politics. The impression which I have thus formed of them is of a group giving priority to the claims of public service. They have been sending money even from South and East Africa, and have been taking part in the struggles there. I include among these Gujaratis Gujarati-speaking Parsis and Muslims, for I notice that Gujarati-speaking Memons too have some work to their credit. Wherever I come across an isolated Parsi here and there, I get an experience of their love for me. I had such an experience even as far away as in the north-east corner of Assam. There was only one Parsi there, but he did not hesitate to show, as well as he could, his sympathy for the cause of non-co-operation.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-10-1921

105. DRAFT OF A MANIFESTO

October 4, 1921

We, the undersigned, consider that the *communique* of the Government of Bombay, dated , regarding the Ali Brothers and others has laid down principles which are subversive of all freedom of expression of opinion, and we desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to the Government whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion that it is not only contrary to the Muslim religion as declared by their Ulemas but also contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as for instance at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians and the Turks who have done no harm to India.

We are also of opinion that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian forthwith to resign his post and find out some honourable means to support himself.

And with that end in view we suggest to everyone in Government employ to learn hand-spinning and hand-weaving, which whilst advancing the national cause would enable them to earn an honest and an honourable living.

We urge the country in general to finish the boycott of foreign cloth and take to hand-spinning and hand-weaving and stimulate manufacture of khaddar by such means.

A complete boycott of foreign cloth and manufacture by hand-spinning and hand-weaving will enable everyone to earn his or her living without falling back upon Government employment, and enable the Congress to call out both soldiers and civilians and even to take up mass civil disobedience.[1]

From a photostat : S.N. 7633

106. A MANIFESTO

[BOMBAY,
6.50 p.m., October 4, 1921][2]

In view of the prosecution of the Ali Brothers and others for the reasons stated in the Government of Bombay *communique* dated the 15th September 1921, we, the undersigned, speaking in our individual capacity, desire to state that it is the inherent right of everyone to express his opinion without restraint about the propriety of citizens offering their services to, or remaining in the employ of, the Government, whether in the civil or the military department.

We, the undersigned, state it as our opinion, that it is contrary to national dignity for any Indian to serve as a civilian, and more especially as a soldier, under a system of Government, which has brought about India's economic, moral and political degradation and which has used the soldiery and the police for repressing national aspirations, as, for instance, at the time of the Rowlatt Act agitation, and which has used the soldiers for crushing the liberty of the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Turks and other nations who have done no harm to India.

[1] The last two paragraphs have been scored out in the source.
[2] From a photostat of the draft : S.N. 7632

We are also of opinion, that it is the duty of every Indian soldier and civilian to sever his connection with the Government and find some other means of livelihood.

M. K. GANDHI
ABUL KALAM AZAD (CALCUTTA)
AJMAL KHAN (DELHI)
LAJPAT RAI (LAHORE)
MOTILAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)
SAROJINI NAIDU (BOMBAY)
ABBAS TAIYABJI
N. C. KELKAR
V. J. PATEL
VALLABHBHAI J. PATEL (AHMEDABAD)
M. R. JAYAKAR (BOMBAY)
D. V. GOKHALE (POONA)
S. G. BANKER
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (ALLAHABAD)
GANGADHAR B. DESHPANDE (BELGAUM)
LAKSHMIDAS TERSI
UMAR SOBANI
JAMNALAL BAJAJ
M. S. ANE (AMRAOTI)
S. E. STOKES (KOTGADH, SIMLA)
M. A. ANSARI (DELHI)
KHALIQUZZAMAN (DELHI)
K. M. ABDUL GAFUR (DELHI)
ABDUL BARI (LUCKNOW)
KRISHNAJI NILKANTH (BELGAUM)
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (MADRAS)
KONDA VENKATAPPAYYA (GUNTUR)
G. HARISARVOTTAM RAO (GUNTUR)
ANASUYA SARABHAI
JITENDRALAL BANERJI
MUSHIR HUSEN KIDWAI (DELHI)
SHYAMA SUNDARA CHAKRAVARTI (CALCUTTA)
RAJENDRA PRASAD (PATNA)
AZAD SOBHANI (LUCKNOW)
HAZRAT MOHANI (CAWNPORE)
MAHADEO HARIBHAI DESAI
BARJORJI FRAMJI BHARUCHA
YAKUB HASAN
B. S. MUNJE (NAGPUR)
JERAMDAS DOLATRAM
M. R. CHOLKAR (NAGPUR)
V. V. DASTANE (BHUSAVAL)
AHMED HAJI SIDICK KHATRI (BOMBAY)
GUDUR RAMACHANDRA RAO (ANDHRA)
D. S. VIJAYRAO (LAHORE)
B. L. SUBBARAMAYYA (ANDHRA)
MIA MAHOMED HAJI JANMAHOMED CHOTANI

Young India, 6-10-1921

107. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[Before *October 5, 1921*]

THE EDITOR OF
THE [BOMBAY] CHRONICLE

SIR,

Persistent rumours supposed to be well founded were brought to me in Madras and have been repeated with greater emphasis in Bombay that my arrest is imminent. If the rumour is well-founded, the Government will certainly deserve congratulations for consistency after the arrest of the Ali Brothers and their co-prisoners, for, now the battle is being waged not against violence, so-called or real, or incitement thereto, but against the very principle of non-co-operation for which the Congress and the Khilafat Committees stand, and that principle is promoting disaffection against the established Government and promoting non-co-operation with the Government by all classes, including civilians and soldiers. The success of that propaganda, it is obvious, means the dissolution of the existing system of Government and it would be unbecoming for those who are avowed non-co-operators to question any steps that the Government may take in order to crush the movement, and I cannot conceive a more logical step than to arrest the author of the movement, unless the administrators of the system intend to change it in accordance with the wishes of the non-co-operators. The country has shown by its dignified calm attitude after the arrests of the Ali Brothers and others, that it has realized the necessity of non-violence. I expect the retention of the same non-violent atmosphere after my arrest or that of any other worker. The people will show their true courage and appreciation of non-violence and of imprisonments for the sake of one's religion and one's country as an honour to be prized not only by remaining absolutely peaceful but by refraining from hartals or any such demonstration. Any hartal following the arrest of myself or any other worker would be a breach of discipline, and, therefore, no mark of respect or affection for the arrested worker. The only way to show one's regard is to demonstrate greater zeal in prosecuting the Congress programme of swadeshi and hasten the advent of swaraj thereby. I would certainly expect, in the event of my arrest, every man and woman in India who believes in the message of swadeshi, but through laziness or weakness has not

yet discarded foreign cloth and taken to hand-spinning and hand-weaving, to discard all foreign cloth and take up the spinning-wheel and the handloom. I would expect the Hindus on no account to relax their efforts for the Khilafat or barter it away for so-called swaraj, for swaraj, without the conciliation of the Mussulmans, is, in my opinion, an inconceivable thing.

Yours, etc.,
M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-10-1921

108. MESSAGE TO WORKERS, CEDED DISTRICTS

October 5, 1921

Mr. Harisarvothama Rao wires from Bombay under date October 5 :

Mahatma Gandhi permits the sending of the following message to the Ceded Districts workers :

Concentrate attention on swadeshi, boycott, completely maintain perfect silence at meetings, avoid demonstration of all description as the first essential discipline of deliberate peaceful action. Teach volunteers to down sticks and stand to duty. I request all to meet at Tadpatri on the 14th instant.

The Hindu, 6-10-1921

109. NOTES

FAMINE RELIEF

The visit to the Ceded Districts brought abundant proof of the spinning-wheel being the greatest insurance against famine, and being also the best measure of relief. There is a severe famine raging in some parts of these Districts. One of the workers told me that a woman not being able to support herself and her children had drowned herself and her children. It is not possible to give doles of charity to hundreds of thousands of men. And men who live on charity lose all sense of self-respect. It is not as if there is no corn to be had in the affected area. People have no work and no money. The Government's relief works consist in breaking and carrying stones. A friend remarked that the Government had roads torn down and repaired in order to find work for the men and

women in distress. Whether roads are torn down or not, road repair is the only relief work the Government provides. I understood, that the actual wage that found its way into a woman's hands was an anna or five pice, and not more than ten pice into a man's hands. I saw on the other hand, that a Congress Committee was paying three annas per day to *Panchama* women working at the spinning-wheel for eight hours a day. And what is being done for the *Panchama* women can be done for thousands of famine-stricken women and for that matter men. In these Districts three annas a day, even for men, is a veritable boon. But the spinning-wheel has possibilities which no other occupation has. For it involves the preliminary processes of ginning and carding and the subsequent process of weaving. In the Ceded Districts it is possible without much difficulty to teach weaving. And if the whole of cloth manufacture can be organized, thousands of men can find permanent occupation in their own homes. Every worker freely acknowledged, that both the workers and the afflicted people had begun to realize the possibilities of the spinning-wheel, and already the people were filled with hope and the workers had commenced organizing spinning and weaving everywhere. I met people who told me, they used to laugh at my statement that the spinning-wheel was the best famine insurance, but practical experience convinced them of the truth of it.

I know, this is but the commencement of the transformation. But when it is complete not a man nor woman having sound hands need beg or starve. Today we have the humiliating and debasing spectacle in a famine year of thousands, though well able to work, living on charity and semi-starvation for want of useful work.

The Only Activity

Therefore I suggest to every Congress and Khilafat worker the advisability of organizing hand-spinning and hand-weaving in his respective district to the exclusion of every other activity. We should be ashamed of resting or having a square meal so long as there is one able-bodied man or woman without work or food. I would urge moneyed men against giving indiscriminate charity or free meals. We shall be cursed by the future generation, if we divide India into givers and receivers of alms. If we want the nation to have any self-respect at all, we must provide against the recurring scarcity. Let those, therefore, who wish to feed the poor, find spinning-wheels for them and provide facilities for learning the various processes.

Expression of Opinion

When in any movement violence is religiously eschewed, it becomes a propaganda movement of the purest type. Any attempt to crush it is an attempt to crush public opinion. And such the present repression has become. Why should I not express my profound conviction,

1. that it is sinful to serve the Government in any capacity whatsoever, especially that of a soldier,
2. that it is sinful to drink intoxicating liquors,
3. that it is sinful to wear foreign cloth,
4. that it is sinful to gamble or speculate in foodstuffs or cotton?

The Government may, as it is carrying on a counter-propaganda, successfully draw recruits for civil and military employment, by various methods induce people to drink and wear foreign cloth and speculate in foodstuffs and cotton, and thus continue to govern so long as people intentionally or ignorantly co-operate with it. It will fall the day the people are convinced to the contrary. And just as I carry on my propaganda among the winebibbers and the cotton speculators to wean them from their evil ways, I claim the right to tell the soldier face to face what is his duty in accordance with my opinion. Why should the soldier be kept in ignorance of what is going on in the country? Is the Government afraid, that if he comes to know the truth, he will no longer serve it? A Government worth the name should be able fully to educate the soldiery and hold its loyalty. But in India everything is armed,—peace, loyalty and opinion. Only the people are disarmed. Our duty therefore is clear. We must claim, even though it be on the gallows, to hold and openly to express any opinion we choose, so long as we do not directly or indirectly cause violence. That is the battle of non-violent non-co-operation. It must be fought to the finish. I warn the public, that the prosecution for "tampering with the loyalty of the army" is but the precursor of prosecutions for tampering with the loyalty of the people to foreign cloth. What was the burning of the khadi vests and caps of the young men of Calicut? What is the crusade against the students of the Vizagapatam Medical School, if it is not an insensate crusade against khadi?

The Sole Test

But this is exactly the kind of test through which we must pass, if we are to gain swaraj. If it is true that this Government exists for its special interests which are antagonistic to those of the people

at large, it must vindicate its position at any cost, and we must not be angry with it on that account. Its attempt at suppressing the growth of free public opinion is no new discovery. We have known these attributes of the Government, and it is for our knowledge of their existence that we are seeking to destroy the system under which it is being carried on. It exists for the slow but certain exploitation of India and her raw products, and for so enervating India as to make her perpetually subservient to the foreign exploiters, in other words to imprison us in our own homes. And the system devised to bring about such a state of things is one of rewards and punishments, rewards in the shape of titles and emoluments for those who assist the system, and punishment, even terrorism, for those who seek to end or mend it. So the Government is bound to make a desperate attempt to stifle all expression of opinion and all activity that would injure its special interests. Let us not delude ourselves into the belief that the Government has been generous enough to stay its hands up to the last moment. Let us admit at once that the Government is the most powerful and resourceful corporation the world has ever seen. It bides its time, it does allow its opponents to play; but it strikes immediately they betray seriousness. There can be no question of generosity about a robber who holds on to the stolen property as long as he ever can allow the robbed to make all the childish attempts possible for the recovery of stolen property, but is ready to cut him down as soon as he becomes serious and is likely to succeed in his attempt at recovery. When a robber acts in such a methodical manner, we consider him to be clever in his unscrupulousness and we regard him as hypocritical when he puts on the air of injured innocence. Our resourcefulness lies in not playing into the hands of this Government. We must not be goaded into madness and violence by its imprisonments whether mild or dramatic. We must not flinch from the gallows. I love the Ali Brothers as I love my blood-brothers. But I would not plead with the Government if its judges sentenced them to be hanged. I would know that it was a glorious death they had died and would envy them their good fortune. If they are sentenced to penal servitude for life, I would know that I would release them by the establishment of swaraj at the earliest opportunity.

The only remedy (and it is a most efficacious remedy) open to us is to let the Government do its worst, believe that its worst is the best for the country, and therefore to remain unruffled by repression and prosecute our appointed programme to the finish in the full belief that it must bring the relief we are seeking. That

programme is the introduction of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in every home and village.

An Apt Anecdote

Maulana Azad Sobhani, who has been doing wonderful work for swadeshi, was telling me a thrilling story of Egyptian coolness and bravery. He told me that once the soldiers surrounded an Egyptian mosque and wanted to prevent nationalist propaganda inside it. The congregation was listening to a young man speaking to it. He would not desist and was shot. The congregation remained unmoved. Another young man took up the discourse and was shot whilst he was going on, and thus seven young men were shot till the discourse was finished, the congregation remaining unmoved all the while the glorious sacrifice was going on. The Egyptians do not believe in non-violence. But they are fine soldiers. They did not want the mosque to be blown to pieces nor the whole congregation in a vain attempt to retaliate. They wanted to show that they would not be cowed down, and no orders could bend their spirit. And so, as if nothing had happened, the discourse was finished. Death and life became with the congregation synonymous terms. The moral of the story is unmistakable. We who are pledged to non-violence are endeavouring to cultivate the bravery of the seven young Egyptians and the congregation. We must acquire the courage to face death in the pursuit of our goal without even wishing to kill, and victory during the remaining three months is a certainty.

The Thickening Plot

For the Government is marshalling all its forces. I have just learnt, that Mr. Phooken, a barrister and member of the aristocracy of Assam has been called upon to file security for keeping the peace. I had the pleasure of meeting him during my tour. He is a soldier and a sportsman. But he has become a convinced non-violationist. He believes, that nothing but non-violence can possibly put hope in the Indian breast and make swaraj possible during the year. But Mr. Phooken is a brave worker. He and his co-workers wish to revive swadeshi to the full, and the Assam Government do not like the idea. In Andhradesha a powerful zemindar, Kumar Raja of Gampalagudem, has been similarly treated, because he had the courage to do temperance work. These are but two stray instances I have come across in the papers I have been able to secure during my travels. I have no doubt that many such workers are being silenced and many more

will be. This is all good news, if we who remain behind will continue the work of our more fortunate comrades who are being imprisoned. I do call them fortunate, for it is the privilege of the oppressed to be in prison. Where tyranny rules, prison for a just man is an honourable place. It is the price that a tyrant exacts from those who cross his path or purpose. These imprisonments should teach us to persist in our effort. We need no leaders when the way is mapped out for us. We are in the happy position of knowing what to do and how to do it. Let us show ourselves worthy of swaraj by feeling not despondent but elated over the incarceration of leaders and going on with our work with the calm courage of the Egyptian congregation in the anecdote related by me.

No More Sticks

During our travels in Madras and the Ceded Districts as elsewhere, we found much dissipation of energy. Vast crowds gathering everywhere and waiting for hours in order merely to have a glimpse. The yelling and the noise were unbearable. We noticed, too, that wherever previous preparation was made as in Trichinopoly, Chettinad, Tinnevelly and other places, the order was all that could be desired, and we were able to go through a great deal of work without any difficulty. In the Ceded Districts, however, we saw the volunteers carrying bamboo sticks seven feet in length. These were meant to be used for forming chains to protect the guests from the crowds rushing towards them. I could see that the sticks were a hindrance, interfered with easy movement and constituted a danger in the midst of crowds. I was myself in danger of having my eyes hurt more than once. And instead of feeling the protection of the volunteers, I felt the danger of their long sticks causing me serious injury any moment. I showed the volunteers that strong ropes would serve their purpose much better than these sticks. Maulana Azad Sobhani saw the point of my remarks, and as the sticks could never be used by the volunteers under the pledge of non-violence for causing hurt, he induced them at Tadpatri to put them away. I would suggest such a change to all volunteer corps. As our movement is avowedly peaceful, it is much better even to drop sticks. Soldiers of peace that we are, we should copy the ordinary soldier as little as possible whether in point of uniform or otherwise.

Want of Training

It was painful to notice the want of training among the volunteers in many places. Except at the few places such as I have men-

tioned, they were always a hindrance in spite of the best of motives. They would insist on surrounding, if not mounting, the cars. They would insist on walking in front and obstructing the passage. They did not know how to march in step. They would not walk in twos. It was most difficult to pass instructions to them. It is high time they were thoroughly organized and were instructed to follow certain rules.

Chairs out of Place

As a rule now, one rarely sees chairs at public meetings. They are all in the open air. A little platform with or without canopy is generally improvized in the centre. As I cannot speak standing, a chair is as a rule provided for me, and therefore naturally for my companions. These chairs mar the harmony of the surroundings. I suggest the use of the simple old square table for me to speak from. We can certainly revive the old art in keeping with our simple and natural surroundings. I was pleased to observe throughout the tour, that for covering and decoration khadi only was invariably used.

"Ethics of Destruction"

Bada Dada (Dwijendranath Tagore, Shantiniketan) has sent me the following, upon reading the article headed "Ethics of Destruction"[1]. It is naturally a source of joy to me that one so venerable and learned should agree with the ethical position taken up by me in opposition even to those whose opinion I value and respect. The reader will be glad to find that in Bada Dada we have a *rishi* who in his quiet seclusion follows the national movement with the avidity of a young man of five and twenty, and is constantly thinking of it and praying for its success. Here is the letter:

> There was a merchant who suddenly became bankrupt, and was reduced to utter poverty; at the same time his wife was bed-ridden, suffering from acute rheumatic pain. There was an apothecary who dealt in patent medicine and always wanted cash payment from his customers. A doctor friend came to see the lady, and at the same time her daughter also came from her father-in-law's house to see her sick mother and brought with her a ten-rupee note so that she might buy the patent medicine which could cure her pain immediately. She handed over the note to the doctor, and told him to get the medicine from the apothecary's shop which was near at hand, and went back. The doctor said that the medicine, no doubt, would give her instant relief, but at the same time

[1] Dated 1-9-1921

it would injure her health to such a degree that she would remain decrepit throughout her life. However, the doctor said that he knew an electrician who was a next door neighbour and could cure rheumatism by electric treatment, his charge being Rs. 10/- per day. In a month he would perfectly cure the disease for good without in the least injuring her general health.

But the patient insisted that she wanted immediate relief, and repeatedly asked the doctor for the bank-note so that she might send for the medicine at once. But the doctor repeatedly said that he could not conscientiously give her the note for the purpose, and he considered it to be a sin to do so. But the lady implored and beseeched him to give her the note. The doctor then took the match-box from his pocket and burnt the note to ashes; and said that she need not be afraid, for he was going to bring the electrician immediately at his own expense, which her husband would pay back as soon as he repaired his fortune. When the hope of obtaining instant relief was thus frustrated in a moment, the patient said to the doctor, "Do as you think fit". So the doctor immediately brought the electrician who assured her that she would be permanently cured within a month, if she allowed him to treat her. Then the doctor did what he had promised to the satisfaction of all parties.

Was the burning of the note a virtuous or a sinful act?

The above is exactly analogous with Mr. Gandhi's cloth-burning. Mr. Gandhi refuses to give to the poor the relief that could have been given by distributing the foreign cloth among them. In order to avoid making them permanently miserable creatures, he promised to make them permanently happy by providing them with clothes made by their own hands.

Young India, 6-10-1921

110. HINDUISM

In dealing with the problem of untouchability during the Madras tour, I have asserted my claim to being a *sanatani* Hindu with greater emphasis than hitherto, and yet there are things which are commonly done in the name of Hinduism, which I disregard. I have no desire to be called a *sanatani* Hindu or any other if I am not such. And I have certainly no desire to steal in a reform or an abuse under cover of a great faith.

It is therefore necessary for me once for all distinctly to give my meaning of *sanatana* Hinduism. The word *sanatana* I use in its natural sense,

I call myself a *sanatani* Hindu, because,

1. I believe in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures, and therefore in avatars and rebirth,
2. I believe in the *varnashrama* dharma in a sense in my opinion strictly Vedic but not in its present popular and crude sense,
3. I believe in the protection of the cow in its much larger sense than the popular,
4. I do not disbelieve in idol-worship.

The reader will note that I have purposely refrained from using the word divine origin in reference to the Vedas or any other scriptures. For I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Koran, and the Zend-Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. Nor do I claim to have any first-hand knowledge of these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teaching of the scriptures. I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. I do most emphatically repudiate the claim (if they advance any such) of the present Shankaracharyas and shastris to give a correct interpretation of the Hindu scriptures. On the contrary I believe, that our present knowledge of these books is in a most chaotic state. I believe implicitly in the Hindu aphorism, that no one truly knows the Shastras who has not attained perfection in innocence (ahimsa), truth (*satya*) and self-control (*brahmacharya*) and who has not renounced all acquisition or possession of wealth. I believe in the institution of gurus, but in this age millions must go without a guru, because it is a rare thing to find a combination of perfect purity and perfect learning. But one need not despair of ever knowing the truth of one's religion, because the fundamentals of Hinduism as of every great religion are unchangeable, and easily understood. Every Hindu believes in God and his oneness, in rebirth and salvation. But that which distinguishes Hinduism from every other religion is its cow-protection, more than its *varnashrama*.

Varnashrama is, in my opinion, inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science. It does attach to birth. A man cannot change his *varna* by choice. Not to abide by one's *varna* is to disregard the law of heredity. The division, however, into innumerable castes is an unwarranted liberty taken with the doctrine. The four divisions are all-sufficing.

I do not believe, that inter-dining or even inter-marriage

necessarily deprives a man of his status that his birth has given him. The four divisions define a man's calling, they do not restrict or regulate social intercourse. The divisions define duties, they confer no privileges. It is, I hold, against the genius of Hinduism to arrogate to oneself a higher status or assign to another a lower. All are born to serve God's creation, a Brahmin with his knowledge, a Kshatriya with his power of protection, a Vaisya with his commercial ability and a Sudra with his bodily labour. This however does not mean that a Brahmin for instance is absolved from bodily labour, or the duty of protecting himself and others. His birth makes a Brahmin predominantly a man of knowledge, the fittest by heredity and training to impart it to others. There is nothing, again, to prevent the Sudra from acquiring all the knowledge he wishes. Only, he will best serve with his body and need not envy others their special qualities for service. But a Brahmin who claims superiority by right of knowledge falls and has no knowledge. And so with the others who pride themselves upon their special qualities. *Varnashrama* is self-restraint and conservation and economy of energy.

Though therefore *varnashrama* is not affected by inter-dining or inter-marriage, Hinduism does most emphatically discourage inter-dining and inter-marriage between divisions. Hinduism reached the highest limit of self-restraint. It is undoubtedly a religion of renunciation of the flesh so that the spirit may be set free. It is no part of a Hindu's duty to dine with his son. And by restricting his choice of a bride to a particular group, he exercises rare self-restraint. Hinduism does not regard a married state as by any means essential for salvation. Marriage is a "fall" even as birth is a "fall". Salvation is freedom from birth and hence death also. Prohibition against inter-marriage and inter-dining is essential for a rapid evolution of the soul. But this self-denial is no test of *varna*. A Brahmin may remain a Brahmin, though he may dine with his Sudra brother, if he has not left off his duty of service by knowledge. It follows from what I have said above, that restraint in matters of marriage and dining is not based upon notions of superiority. A Hindu who refuses to dine with another from a sense of superiority misrepresents his dharma.

Unfortunately, today Hinduism seems to consist merely in eating and not-eating. Once I horrified a pious Hindu by taking toast at a Mussulman's house. I saw, that he was pained to see me pouring milk into a cup handed by a Mussulman friend, but his anguish knew no bounds when he saw me taking toast at the Mussulman's hands. Hinduism is in danger of losing its substance

if it resolves itself into a matter of elaborate rules as to what and with whom to eat. Abstemiousness from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and from all kinds of foods, especially meat, is undoubtedly a great aid to the evolution of the spirit, but it is by no means an end in itself. Many a man eating meat and with everybody but living in the fear of God is nearer his freedom than a man religiously abstaining from meat and many other things, but blaspheming God in every one of his acts.

The central fact of Hinduism however is cow-protection. Cow-protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. It takes the human being beyond his species. The cow to me means the entire sub-human world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. Why the cow was selected for apotheosis is obvious to me. The cow was in India the best companion. She was the giver of plenty. Not only did she give milk, but she also made agriculture possible. The cow is a poem of pity. One reads pity in the gentle animal. She is the mother to millions of Indian mankind. Protection of the cow means protection of the whole dumb creation of God. The ancient seer, whoever he was, began with the cow. The appeal of the lower order of creation is all the more forcible because it is speechless. Cow-protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow.

The way to protect is to die for her. It is a denial of Hinduism and ahimsa to kill a human being to protect a cow. Hindus are enjoined to protect the cow by their *tapasya*[1], by self-purification, by self-sacrifice. The present-day cow-protection has degenerated into a perpetual feud with the Mussulmans, whereas cow-protection means conquering Mussulmans by our love. A Mussulman friend sent me some time ago a book detailing the inhumanities practised by us on the cow and her progeny. How we bleed her to take the last drop of milk from her, how we starve her to emaciation, how we ill-treat the calves, how we deprive them of their portion of milk, how cruelly we treat the oxen, how we castrate them, how we beat them, how we overload them. If they had speech, they would bear witness to our crimes against them which would stagger the world. By every act of cruelty to our cattle, we disown God and Hinduism. I do not know that the condition of the cattle in any other part of the world is so bad as in unhappy India. We may not blame the Englishman for this. We may not

[1] Penance, austerity

plead poverty in our defence. Criminal negligence is the only cause of the miserable condition of our cattle. Our *pinjrapoles*[1], though they are an answer to our instinct of mercy, are a clumsy demonstration of its execution. Instead of being model dairy farms and great profitable national institutions, they are merely depots for receiving decrepit cattle.

Hindus will be judged not by their *tilaks*, not by the correct chanting of *mantras*, not by their pilgrimages, not by their most punctilious observance of caste rules but by their ability to protect the cow. Whilst professing the religion of cow-protection, we have enslaved the cow and her progeny, and have become slaves ourselves.

It will now be understood why I consider myself a *sanatani* Hindu. I yield to none in my regard for the cow. I have made the Khilafat cause my own, because I see that through its preservation full protection can be secured for the cow. I do not ask my Mussulman friends to save the cow in consideration of my service. My prayer ascends daily to God Almighty, that my service of a cause I hold to be just may appear so pleasing to Him, that He may change the hearts of the Mussulmans, and fill them with pity for their Hindu neighbours and make them save the animal the latter hold dear as life itself.

I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can. Not that she has no faults. I dare say she has many more than I see myself. But the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there. Even so I feel for and about Hinduism with all its faults and limitations. Nothing elates me so much as the music of the *Gita* or the *Ramayana* by Tulsidas, the only two books in Hinduism I may be said to know. When I fancied I was taking my last breath, the *Gita* was my solace. I know the vice that is going on today in all the great Hindu shrines, but I love them in spite of their unspeakable failings. There is an interest which I take in them and which I take in no other. I am a reformer through and through. But my zeal never takes me to the rejection of any of the essential things of Hinduism. I have said I do not disbelieve in idol-worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol-worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. Why should one be more composed in a church than elsewhere? Images are an aid to worship. No Hindu considers an image to be God. I do not consider idol-worship a sin.

[1] Shelters for crippled and aged cattle

It is clear from the foregoing, that Hinduism is not an exclusive religion. In it there is room for the worship of all the prophets of the world. It is not a missionary religion in the ordinary sense of the term. It has no doubt absorbed many tribes in its fold, but this absorption has been of an evolutionary imperceptible character. Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to his own faith or dharma, and so it lives at peace with all the religions.

That being my conception of Hinduism, I have never been able to reconcile myself to untouchability. I have always regarded it as an excrescence. It is true that it has been handed down to us from generations, but so are many evil practices even to this day. I should be ashamed to think that dedication of girls to virtual prostitution was a part of Hinduism. Yet it is practised by Hindus in many parts of India. I consider it positive irreligion to sacrifice goats to Kali and do not consider it a part of Hinduism. Hinduism is a growth of ages. The very name, Hinduism, was given to the religion of the people of Hindustan by foreigners. There was no doubt at one time sacrifice of animals offered in the name of religion. But it is not religion, much less is it Hindu religion. And so also it seems to me, that when cow-protection became an article of faith with our ancestors, those who persisted in eating beef were excommunicated. The civil strife must have been fierce. Social boycott was applied not only to the recalcitrants, but their sins were visited upon their children also. The practice which had probably its origin in good intentions hardened into usage, and even verses crept in our sacred books giving the practice a permanence wholly undeserved and still less justified. Whether my theory is correct or not, untouchability is repugnant to reason and to the instinct of mercy, pity or love. A religion that establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance or warrant a cruel and inhuman boycott of human beings. And I should be content to be torn to pieces rather than disown the suppressed classes. Hindus will certainly never deserve freedom, nor get it if they allow their noble religion to be disgraced by the retention of the taint of untouchability. And as I love Hinduism dearer than life itself, the taint has become for me an intolerable burden. Let us not deny God by denying to a fifth of our race the right of association on an equal footing.

Young India, 6-10-1921

111. NOT GOOD ENOUGH

The report of the Repressive Laws Committee would have excited thrilling interest fifteen months ago. No one now cares whether these laws are repealed or retained. They have ceased to frighten us because we have ceased to fear arrests and imprisonments. We are now seeking not repeal of particular laws or regulations but a total repeal of the system that has made them possible. We know now that the Government could have done (under ordinary law) all the things (with slight variations) that they have hitherto done under the laws that are to be repealed. Under pressure of necessity the law-advisers of the Government have discovered a potency in Sections 144, 107 and 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code of which they were before unaware. The fact is, that even if the ordinary law were to be changed without a change of spirit the people of India will not benefit by it.

Though therefore the report has no interest for the people, it is a document of abiding interest to the student of the political situation in the country. The report could have been written in identical language ten years ago by the most reactionary of the civilians. The Committee concludes:

> Their retention (of Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act and part 2 of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act 1918) is necessary in view of recent occurrences and possible developments which we cannot but regard with the greatest apprehension.

I have no doubt that every repressive measure that has ever been undertaken has been passed under the same "stern sense of duty" under which the laws mentioned are being retained.

I refuse to think that the officials who passed all the repressive laws took wanton delight in repression. Lord Curzon[1] certainly considered the partition of Bengal a matter of public necessity, and the opponents of the measure as enemies of progress. Sir Michael O'Dwyer honestly believed that the educated classes were idiots who did not know their own welfare, meddled in things they never knew, and were no benefactors of the masses in whose name they professed to speak. General Dyer undoubtedly thought, that unless he could teach us a lesson, every Englishwoman's life was in jeopardy. Only, in all these three cases we (including the

[1] Viceroy of India, 1899-1905

majority of the members of the Committee) considered the officials to have perverted minds incapable of understanding the proud spirit of Bengal, of understanding the agony of educated India which knew by instinct the wants of the masses more truly than the officials in spite of their winter picnics amongst them, and of knowing that Indians would not be guilty of such diabolical unmanliness as General Dyer in his unsoldier-like manner thought us to be. We then used to think the officials were wrong in overriding the people's wishes even though the latter might be in error. We argued to our complete satisfaction, that we were the best judges of our own condition. But now a change has come over some of us. Some of us occupy the position analogous to that of the officials. These consider themselves to be "trustees" for the ignorant masses who are being misled by visionaries, if not also by unscrupulous agitators, and therefore in the teeth of their stubborn opposition (ignorant it may be), they carry on "reformed" legislatures, suppress a revolt in Malabar by sacrificing precious blood although we have offered men ready to go to Malabar unarmed and persuade the Moplahs to stop their mad career of pillage and plunder. They sincerely believe that by so doing they are serving the country.

Thus we are no better than before; probably, if not certainly, we are much worse off. For now there is not only a foreign bureaucracy to cope with, but we have also a national bureaucracy to contend against. Well has Lala Lajpat Rai remarked in his forceful analysis of the report, that what we want is not a change of masters but a change of the system, a change in the relations between the people and the state. The latter must represent the people or be ended. The reason for the strange phenomenon disclosed in the report is to be found in the fact, that the non-official members are irresponsible but they sincerely feel that they know our interests better than we. How can any tinkering therefore answer the aspirations of a people that are awakened and are prepared to suffer for what they understand to be their rights?

Young India, 6-10-1921

112. 30TH SEPTEMBER

The All-India Congress Committee after a full debate fixed 30th September as the final date for completing the boycott of foreign cloth. The choice lay between 30th September and 30th October. The argument advanced in favour of September was, that if boycott could be completed in October, it should be possible in September. It must be confessed that we have failed in fulfilling our resolution. Much work has certainly been done. Khadi has become much more popular and even fashionable. In many places the quality has also improved. There are certainly many more spinning-wheels working, many new looms have been made, and in the ordinary course the progress made would be considered satisfactory. But as a war measure the record is altogether small.

After all the success of the movement depends upon the consumer. The importer has certainly helped. But the consumer has been satisfied with a partial boycott. He has given up his cap chiefly. Some have parted with their vests but very few with their *dhotars*[1]. The consumers have not helped manufacture to an appreciable degree. Manufacture of yarn has been confined to the poor. The consumer has not realized the necessity of a complete change. He has not visualized the new life we must lead under swaraj. It is not by temporizing we shall succeed. A complete transformation is a necessity of the case.

At the same time I saw in Bengal as well as Madras that the desire was there. Most people were hopeful, and said that with a little more time they would be able to organize manufacture without difficulty. In the matter of swadeshi the women presented greater difficulty. They could not reconcile themselves to the change so readily as men. But it is the overcoming of these difficulties that would give us courage, hope, stamina and above all knowledge of the true condition of India. Swadeshi means a real industrial revival and consequent disappearance of grinding and growing pauperism in the land. And when we have found ourselves able to become self-contained without state aid regarding our cloth supply and have solved what had appeared to be an insoluble problem for the poverty of India, we shall have confidence in our ability to manage our own affairs.

[1] Dhoti

Today Sir William Vincent[1] is able to make us dance to his tune. He makes the self-styled representatives of the people believe, that the British power alone can protect the interests of the minorities; he is able to convince them that all these long years India has proved unable to find officers and men who could defend her borders against invaders.

But all this will be changed. Sir William himself will play a different tune, when he finds that without the British power and indeed in spite of it, we are able to dispense with foreign aid for the supply of our vital needs.

Swadeshi is our Khilafat, it is our cow of plenty. When we have protected swadeshi, we shall find that we have the power to protect the Khilafat, and that we have the ability to manage our own affairs including the defence of our borders.

If thirty crores of people *will*, if the crore members of the Congress *will*, I am sure that we can boycott foreign cloth and manufacture enough for our wants during this month. Three conditions are necessary: we must discard all foreign cloth, do with the least possible cloth during the transition stage, and get all the khadi we need woven by the village weaver out of yarn spun by ourselves or our neighbours.

Young India, 6-10-1921

113. *PITFALLS IN SWADESHI*

The letter given above[2] has been written by a merchant friend. He has filled his coffers with a roaring trade in foreign cloth, but he has now come to understand where the good of the country lies and to appreciate the importance of the spinning-wheel, that is, of khadi. We should give serious thought to all the dangers he mentions.

We try needlessly to encourage the use of mill cloth, and it is also a mistake to go running to buy it. Indian mill cloth will always be in demand. If, by our actions, we tempt the mill-owners, the quality of cloth is bound to deteriorate and the traders in such cloth, who are concerned only with their profits, will be tempted to put up the prices. We cannot expect the dealers to conduct

[1] Member, Governor-General's Executive Council

[2] Not given here. The letter drew attention to the danger posed to the swadeshi movement by people's growing interest in mill cloth in preference to khadi.

their business for the good of the country till the people themselves have that good at heart. Which is easier of the two, that I should put up with the discomfort of wearing khadi,—if discomfort it is —and, if its price is high, pay that price; or that the mill-owners should forgo their profits of crores of rupees? It is foolish to expect any big sacrifices from the mill-owners. They will be the last, not the first, to wake up, and we should conduct our struggle on that assumption. To blame them on this ground is to blame human nature. In their place we would certainly behave in much the same way. Those of us, therefore, who have accepted swadeshi as a religious duty should not use mill-made cloth.

Naturally, therefore, hand-spun and hand-woven khadi is all that is left to us. In the name itself, "khadi", there is no magic. The magic lies in its virtues. In appearance, too, it is not very attractive. We would have readily taken to hand-spun and hand-woven cloth if, instead of looking like khadi, it had the softness and the finish of muslin. But let it be inscribed in letters of gold that it is only through universal use of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth that the country's poverty can be abolished and that, only if this is done, will swaraj be possible. In short, khadi imported from Japan or produced in our mills is not khadi but something which merely looks like it, and we must keep away from it.

A man from Nadiad should not have to go to Ahmedabad or Bombay for real khadi. He should himself produce it in Nadiad, for the idea is to save that much money for the people of Nadiad. Or, he may use khadi woven in his own district from yarn also spun in the district. This simply cannot be expensive. A home-made loaf is always cheaper than that sold in the market. It works out cheaper in the long run that I should give two annas to a neighbouring weaver than one pice to Manchester, for something from these two annas will return to me whereas, by starving him to feed a weaver in Manchester or Bombay, I shall make my neighbour a burden on myself. I shall have to open an alms-house for his benefit. In this country, we have been deluding ourselves with the notion that in opening such charitable homes we do a virtuous deed. We do not see, rather we do not want to see, that behind the circumstances which necessitate the starting of such home lies a moral wrong. How would we relish it if someone were to deprive us of our property and then start a charity home for us? Or, if through long practice we become used to begging, what kind of an impression about us will a stranger carry away? Yet, by giving up our age-old crafts of spinning and weaving, we have actually become beggars and, if we do not take heed, will become worse still.

Finally, according to the principle that he who eats without having performed a sacrifice is a thief, we shall have proved ourselves thieves.

The false pride of Bengalis does not disturb me. Even if Gujarat alone carries out the pledge of swadeshi, Bengal will certainly follow suit. It certainly does not seem easy to wean the people in Madras from their love of attractive clothes but, at such a moment of spiritual awakening, we should not be surprised to see those who seemed to be in the forefront falling behind while those who seemed to be lagging behind forge ahead. Efforts are being made in Bengal too.

Not knowing the truth about picketing in Bengal, the correspondent has been unfair to the Bengalis. Those who picketed in front of the Marwari shops were Marwaris and volunteers of the Khilafat Committee. The Bengalis had no hand whatever in the matter. The picketing was started with the purest motive and was throughout carried on in a disciplined manner. A Marwari gentleman like Sheth Jamnalalji took a leading part in it.

But it is about the women that I am most worried. We have so far kept them totally ignorant about such vital issues and it is only recently that they have started taking interest in them. Until their love of foreign cloth is exorcised from them, the cause of swadeshi will not prosper. Fortunately, there has been, within a short time, so great an awakening in their midst that I observe profound changes coming over them. It is most necessary, however, that men atone to the full for their indifference in the past. Once foreign cloth has disappeared completely from their midst, the women will not take long to catch up. But even men have not ceased to care for outward show. They have not yet completely overcome their fondness for fine cloth. Dhotis, for example, they must always have mill-made, and the heaviness of khadi seems an inconvenience. How can we expect anything from women when men themselves have not completely turned away from such things? There are, thus, many obstacles in our path of swadeshi. When we have removed them all, we are sure to see the sun of swaraj rising on the horizon.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1921

114. MY NOTES

EAST AFRICA

We read reports in our newspapers about the plight of Indians in East Africa and friends over there also keep me informed about things.[1] But I rarely refer to the matter in *Navajivan* or *Young India*. I hope this will not be taken to imply that I am not aware of their plight or that there is a falling off in my sympathy for them. I am in the position of a person who, attacked with swords from all sides, ignores pinpricks. The pathetic condition of India's economic, political and religious life pains me so deeply that by comparison all other misfortunes seem of no account to me. It is also clear to me that the solution of East Africa's problem will have to wait till India's problem is solved. When the well is full, water is bound to flow into the trough; in the same way, once India's ills are cured those of the Indians in East Africa are bound to be. If we were not busy applying effective remedies for India's malady, all of us would have instantly combined to take up the East Africa problem.

This is not to suggest that Indians in East Africa should not make any efforts on their own. That they must do. All that I mean is that they will get, and have been getting, real help from India not on their specific account but as part of the struggle to cure India's ills. India's strength, they realize, has grown so much that it is a constant help to them. Their own strength, too, has increased.

The whites in East Africa have crossed the bounds of decency and seem determined to disregard all canons of English law. This is uncivil disobedience of law. When disobedience of law is for selfish ends, it is not civil disobedience. The whites sought General Smuts' help in their attempt, but have received none from that quarter. I am confident that Indians in East Africa will come to no harm, provided they display courage, keep within the bounds of civility and propriety and remain truthful. An untruthful man is always a coward. The intentions of the British in East Africa are evil and, therefore, if the Indians scrupulously keep on the path of truth, the insolence of wickedness in the Bri-

[1] The reference is to the disputes that had arisen between European and Indian colonists concerning proposals for racial segregation in residential and commercial areas.

tish will remain curbed. Keeping on the path of truth means that Indians should see that their case is strong, that it is not overstated and should overcome their own failings. One charge which is always levelled against us, and which is justified, is that we do not know what is cleanliness, that even when we are reasonably well off, our homes are dirty, that we make things dirty everywhere and huddle together. To the extent that there is truth in this, we should reform ourselves.

The other charge is that we cheat the Negroes. This charge is baseless. In fact, those who make it are themselves greater cheats, but we should of course change our ways in so far as it is true.

The third charge, which is not brought but which we know can be levelled, is that we are incapable of working unitedly. It is true we are free from racial pride, but we hardly think of the community's good in our preoccupation with private and selfish ends. When we display this failing in foreign countries, despite the fact that we are a small number there, it stands out conspicuously and shows us in the most unfavourable light.

If the Indians in East Africa remain free from these failings, or get rid of them, and keep up their courage, they will come to no harm.

Rishikesh

Rishikesh is an important place of pilgrimage on the way from Hardwar to Gangotri. From here the pilgrims begin their slow climb of the mountain range. Nature has lavished all her beauty on the place. The hills, the dancing, impetuous Ganga and her clear waters, all compel admiration for the foresight of the *rishis*, for their aesthetic sense and their simplicity. At the time of the Kumbh fair, however, I saw what the place had been reduced to by their descendants. Unscrupulous sadhus, with little else but the name of sadhu about them, were busy robbing the innocent pilgrims. The sight of physically unclean pilgrims fouling this holy place all over brought tears to my eyes. The *rishis* of old used to go miles out into lonely jungle to answer such calls. But Rishikesh today has a sizable population. That they should shamelessly foul the banks of the Ganga and then believe that they have been "out in the jungle" is the utmost limit of lethargy, ignorance and uncleanliness. I had seen all this myself five years ago, but my heart cries out and my head hangs in shame on reading the terrible account sent by a correspondent after an experience of three months in the place. There is no limit to the wickedness which fills this holy place.

The person who has sent this account has given all particulars of names and addresses, and there is no suggestion from him that the account should not be published. But I do not have the courage to publish it with all these particulars. Some portions of the account are unprintable. The writer gives a vivid picture of the licentiousness of the sadhus, their love of pomp and luxury and their debauchery. There is also a painful description of the diseases they are prone to. We are told how poor pilgrims are robbed and how, in innumerable cases, the sadhu's garb is used to gratify selfish desires, why it is that Swargashram gives just the contrary impression. Who can clean up all this moral filth? The letter suggests that Shankaracharya and I should do something to remedy this state of affairs, but, for the present at any rate, I do not think it is within my power to attempt any such cleansing. The most I can do is to publish a summary of the letter. If any persons living there are moved by this narrative to do something, let them make the attempt. The moral corruption to be found in the holy places of the Hindus is so dreadful that no improvement is possible unless there is a fundamental change of attitude in a majority of them. The transformation of these places from dens of vice into abodes of virtue depends on the degree to which there is a change of heart among the Hindus during this holy struggle. Cleaning up these places will really mean regeneration of Hinduism. This will require the highest *tapascharya* and effective local work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-10-1921

115. LETTER TO GANGADHARRAO DESHPANDE[1]

[Before *October 8, 1921*]

DEAR GANGADHARRAO[2],

I hear that it is your turn now to have the good fortune of living in the jail palace. I envy your luck. You and others who go to jail add to the burden of those who remain outside. But we will surrender all our worries to God. I am sure you will insist

[1] This letter was read out at a public meeting at Hubli on October 15 by Rangarao Ramachandra Diwakar who was acquitted on October 8. *Vide* also "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

[2] A political worker of Karnatak; popularly known as the "lion of Karnatak"

on having a spinning-wheel while in jail. Rest assured we shall not allow you to enjoy the pleasure of living in jail beyond the end of this year.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

116. FOREWORD TO "TO AWAKING INDIA"

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
October 8, 1921

In the following pages Mr. Stokes has not only given his argument in support of burning foreign cloth, but he has also given the economics of swadeshi in a nutshell. If we will but remember that destruction is as useful and necessary as construction for any organic growth we should have no difficulty in understanding the necessity of burning foreign clothing for the quick programme set before the country. But Mr. Stokes' effort must prove helpful at a time when there is a fierce attack being made against burning.

To me this opposition shows the strength of attachment we have cultivated for foreign fineries and an inadequate appreciation of the misery that the use of foreign cloth has brought to millions of the homes of India. But I must not enter into argument; I write this merely to commend Mr. Stokes' able essays to the attention of the reader.

M. K. GANDHI

To Awaking India

117. SPEECH AT FUNCTION OF WORKERS' SCHOOLS, AHMEDABAD[1]

October 8, 1921

I have come to you after a long time. It is now two and a half months since I met you last. Many things have happened during the interval and neither you nor I know what things are yet in store. We must live as God may ordain.

Before explaining to you what is happening in the country

[1] At the Sevashram of Anasuya Sarabhai; Lala Lajapat Rai and C. Rajagopalachari were present.

today, I shall first deal with your own problems. I hear that there are some differences between the workers and the mill-owners. The arbitrators are to meet shortly to consider these matters. The award of the arbitrators should be patiently awaited. In the past the workers had on one occasion lost their patience, but ultimately they heeded their advisers and postponed the strike.

The mill-owners have not been able to start grain shops as they had promised to do. I shall exert whatever influence I have to get this done. We should not become impatient. Strikes should not be resorted to in a hurry. Those who demand justice should learn to wait. We have accepted the method of arbitration. We should be content with what is awarded by the arbitrator. It is possible that those workers who are not members of the Union may get benefits which they would not have got otherwise.

Sometimes we get whatever we demand; but we should not put forward unreasonable demands. If we do, we shall be open to the same charge which is levelled against the mill-owners. They are accused of taking unfair advantage of people's hardships. What else can be the meaning of the rise in prices? We should not follow their example. Our demands should be reasonable. Generally the workers' demands are so.

The relationship between workers and employers should be one of partnership. It is fitting that this relationship should be like that between father and son. As the son benefits from the wisdom and experience of the father, so should the workers from those of the employers. I am working to create conditions in which employers will not exploit workers and workers will not cheat employers.

I now come to the present situation. The relationship between a government and its citizens should also be like that between father and son. But the Government wants to exploit India as much as it can. We are not likely to get anything from it. If at all we get anything it will be something similar to what they have done in whisking away the Ali Brothers. This is like the relationship between a master and his slave. We have to secure their release not by fawning upon the Government or petitioning it, but by winning swaraj and then exercising our power under swaraj. We have to break these shackles by means of khadi, as was described in the song sung by the student here. The thousands of innocent men and women who will go to jail hereafter will have to secure their release in the same manner. This will not be a difficult task if we embrace swadeshi. But we are not yet ready to give up foreign cloth. For workers, khadi is

the only thing. Workers are not so poor as not to afford khadi. They should wear only khadi, which is a dress of culture. They can have their own yarn, their own spinning-wheel and loom and they should wear khadi woven with their own hands. Till this becomes possible it is better that they wear, if necessary, no more than a loin-cloth as I do.

I insist that even khadi for your use you should not buy. You should wear only hand-made khadi woven by yourselves. After you have done this, you may ask me why the Ali Brothers have not been released, why we have not got swaraj and why justice has not been secured on the Khilafat issue. I shall be ready to answer all these questions from you.

It is rumoured that the Government will arrrest me. It has a right to do so. I have used language similar to the Ali Brothers'. We should not fear the Government; we may fear God alone. According to my dharma, as I understand it, violence is a sin and, as long as the compact between Hindus and Muslims remains, violence should be taboo even for the latter. If they arrest me, you should not start setting fire to buildings, nor should you get angry or use abusive language. If today you are not enthusiastic about swadeshi, see that, after my arrest, you pursue it more vigorously and ply the spinning-wheel day and night. If the Hindus harbour any unworthy thoughts about the Muslims, they should banish such thoughts and so should the Muslims with regard to the Hindus. No workers should take liquor, commit theft or treat the *Dhed* or the *Bhangi* as untouchable. This is what I expect from you.

I do not want to go on touring. I have no new ideas or arguments. I now wish to see only solid work.

I shall not be able to attend such gatherings henceforth. It is difficult for me to spare even as much time as I have done on this occasion. I should, therefore, be spared such duties. Please give up adoring me and get busy with the work which I have called upon you to take up. If you do that, swaraj is as good as in our hands.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

118. TELEGRAM TO GOPABANDHU DAS[1]

[After *October 8, 1921*]

ONLY FILE BOLD TRUE STATEMENT. NEVER MIND CONSEQUENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7636

119. IF I AM ARRESTED

Rumours are afloat that I may be arrested. Everyone says that he has reliable news. In Madras a gentleman even sent a telegram saying that I had been arrested.

It would not be surprising if the Government did arrest me. The Government has the right to do so. I have committed the very same crime for which the Ali Brothers and their companions have been arrested. It would not be wrong to say that I am the real culprit behind their crime. What is the sense in leaving the root alone and chopping off the branches? I was the person to assert that one could openly tell even soldiers that they were committing a sin in serving this Government. Again it was I who called for the destruction of the present system. If the Ali Brothers can be arrested for these two crimes, why not I?

Why should anyone be angry if I am arrested? How else would the Government know whether my views are shared by large sections of the people or only by a handful of them? Only that man may be said to hold certain views who is prepared to suffer for them. Why should the Government not test whether I really hold the views which I claim to do?

This is how non-co-operation works. Either the Government mends itself or arrests non-co-operators, fines them or sends them to the gallows.

If people are true non-co-operators, if they are brave and wise, they will not be cowed down or yield to anger or resort to violence or strikes in the event of my or any other non-co-operator's arrest.

[1] In reply to his letter dated October 8 in which, as editor of the *Samaj*, an Oriya weekly, the addressee had asked for the advice of Gandhiji whether he should defend or not in a complaint of alleged defamation of police constables by his journal

They should rejoice at the arrests as if nothing unexpected had happened or, rather, that only the expected had happened. They should be happy to think that we would now soon arrive at the destination.

Whoever loses his self-control takes to violence or goes on a strike, will only disgrace me and cause me pain, will be a traitor to the motherland. If such a man claims to be a non-co-operator, he would be violating his own pledge.

The way in which the country remained peaceful on the arrest of the Ali Brothers was, in my view, simply grand. I see our victory in that. I hope for a similar or even a better demonstration of peace on my arrest. We have to win, and so live by dying and not by killing.

I wish and hope that my arrest will have only one result, namely, that men and women will then understand what even now I find it difficult to explain to them, discard all sluggishness and hesitation about it and act upon it and so win swaraj. If we still have any weakness for foreign cloth left in us, I wish that it should disappear. At present people consign to the fire only a small part of their stock of foreign cloth; on my arrest they should immediately make a bonfire of all foreign cloth in their homes, no matter how large the stock. Really speaking, this should have been done on the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Following their arrest swadeshi activity has considerably increased among people, but not enough.

I hope that, on my arrest, every man, woman and child who has not yet started plying the spinning-wheel will immediately do so. I do hope that they will learn to have regard for *Antyajas*, will mix with them and share their sufferings.

I also hope that the *Antyajas* will reform themselves, desist from drinking and give up other addictions, abandon meat-eating, observe cleanliness and earn an honest living by spinning and weaving.

Everyone should remain peaceful and see that others also do so.

Hindus should be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of Muslims and Muslims for Hindus. They should honour one another's religion; accordingly, Hindus should think that the defence of the Khilafat is their religious duty, so much so that, if necessary, they should be ready for delay in swaraj for its sake. Muslims can have no interest in swaraj if the Khilafat issue is not settled.

Nobody should think that it would be all darkness after Gandhi. It is not right to think in that way; on the contrary, it is a sign of weakness. If we are fit for swaraj, no leader should be considered indispensable. Everybody should have the capacity to understand and protect the interests of the motherland.

It is, however, necessary to appoint someone to be the leader. Hence we should immediately proceed to appoint as leader any person whose views, methods and character appeal to large numbers and, though we may occasionally quarrel and argue with him, one should finally display perfect discipline and obey him. Once we have known the means of winning swaraj and understood how we may serve the cause of the Khilafat, there will be nothing about which we do not know what to do. There are no more things for us to learn. All that is necessary is to act; India will reap as she sows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

120. GUJARAT'S TEST

I have returned to Gujarat to know what truth there is in the good reports I heard about it while I was touring. It was the first to accept non-co-operation. Even at that time I had said that complete non-co-operation by Gujarat alone would of course win swaraj for it, but that it would also do so for the rest of the country. I still hold that view. Failure to win swaraj by the end of this year will be a matter of shame to me no doubt, but it will be so to the whole country as well and especially to Gujarat. I shall certainly disclaim responsibility by saying that the conditions I had laid down were not fulfilled and that, therefore, it was none of my fault. But what excuse will Gujarat be able to give? It can only say : "We could not keep the pledge we took, and serve us right too." It is, therefore, the duty of every Gujarati to see that such a humiliating confession does not become necessary.

I heard Gujarat being praised, but I find Gujaratis have not resigned Government jobs. Only a few of the lawyers have given up practice. The students have done reasonably well, but only relatively.

What, then, is the work for which Gujarat is being given credit?

It is in regard to swadeshi. What more can we say about Gujarat than that it has done reasonably well in this field too? Swadeshi is the one thing in which we really believe. Until every province and every district spins and weaves the cloth it requires and boycotts foreign cloth, swaraj will remain an impossibility. Hence the credit which is being given to Gujarat is justified only if it is with regard to swadeshi.

The other matter is the movement concerning untouchables. I have referred to it in my notes. We can undoubtedly claim that in Gujarat untouchables can freely attend public meetings. But can we be satisfied with that? We cannot even think of securing a kind of swaraj from which they will be excluded. To think of it would mean that we wanted to shake off our own slavery to others while remaining slave-owners ourselves. Will God ever tolerate that? Is this ever possible, either? Are the slaves themselves likely to permit it? Again, can we be sure that our owners too will not take care to win over our slaves to their side and have an alliance with them against us? We, Gujaratis, therefore, should carefully consider whether we have really prepared ourselves for swaraj, whether we have scored full marks.

I know we have done very good work for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Our meetings are well organized. We have also achieved considerable success in propaganda against drink. We see that khadi is becoming quite popular in Gujarat. Ordinarily all this would be considered satisfactory as signs of a sleeping Gujarat waking up. A person who has put forth great strength in swimming but has not strength enough for the final dash to the shore will be drowned and it will certainly be said that he put forth too little strength. We have to look at the matter in this light. Have we put forth enough strength to win swaraj? I do not say we have, nor do I say we have not, for we have still two and a half months left and we can do a great deal in that time. It does not matter that our first dead-line, which was September, has passed, for that only reflected my optimism. We should remember, however, that the same programme was accepted by the Congress in December with full knowledge of its implications. We did so well between September and December [in 1920] that the delegates felt confident and adopted the one-year time-limit. In effect, therefore, the nation's pledge commenced from December and, considering what Gujarat has done so far, we need not be surprised if it is able to achieve its goal in the two and a half months which still remain. It will be a sad thing if it does not.

I am told that people in Gujarat are ready for imprisonment, that there are some for whom even hanging holds no terror and that, in any case Gujarat will preserve peace till the very end. This remains to be seen, however. Truly speaking, we have had no occasion to go to jail in the last twelve years. But that is no matter for regret, for we do not wish to seek imprisonment by violating moral values. For the present, it is enough that we are mentally prepared.

But let us be clear as to what is meant by being ready for imprisonment. The day on which we are imprisoned without being guilty, that day we should regard as auspicious. Our relatives, too, should not be unhappy or shed tears at our imprisonment and we should be able to look upon the hardships of jail-life as so many comforts.

Being prepared for imprisonment also means that we should not be disturbed if our property is confiscated and auctioned. I have even met "brave" men who told me that they were ready to go to jail but not to have their property attached and that, if it was, they would not be able to bear the loss. This state of mind does not suggest readiness for imprisonment. Under an unjust rule, owning property is beyond the reach of most. Only a few can own it and these latter are partners in injustice, or become so at the crucial moment, that is, when injustice shows itself in its true colours. Being ready for jail, therefore, implies being unconcerned at loss of property.

The truth is that we use the word "jail" as a synonym for suffering. Readiness for jail means nothing less than the refusal to submit to the Government, whatever the penalty. This includes readiness to be hanged, though ordinarily we do not understand imprisonment to include hanging. It remains to be seen how many are ready to fight and uphold the honour of the country and respect for dharma even at the risk of being hanged.

The sacrifice we wish to make is a pure one. The least our self-purification should include is

1. acceptance of swadeshi,
2. giving up the practice of untouchability,
3. unreserved acceptance of truth and non-violence, and
4. Hindu-Muslim friendship.

I should like every Congress Committee and the Khilafat Committee to draw up their accounts on this basis.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

121. MY NOTES

End of the Tour

Hardly anyone could have toured India as I have done in the last 13 months. The tour was as good as a *pradakshina*[1] of the country. It was in the nature of a pilgrimage to me. I covered the country from Karachi in the west to Dibrugarh in the east and from Rawalpindi in the north to Tuticorin in the south. I have said what I wished to say and there is nothing new for me to say. I have already explained the conditions for securing justice on the Khilafat and the Punjab issues and winning swaraj. The responsibility now rests entirely with the people. They can follow swadeshi and win swaraj. Without swadeshi, there can be no swaraj.

I should not now be troubled with invitations to visit places, for it is necessary that for the three months that remain I should retire to one place, think, write and answer people's doubts.

Much can be done by the people in three months. If all took a vow of silence and gave themselves wholly to solid work, our goal would definitely be achieved. Work alone, not words, will win swaraj.

Silence Is Work

Who can hope to rival the perfect silence of God, and His work, too? He needs no time even so much as to stretch Himself, or to sleep. When we are asleep He is awake. He does not interrupt His work even to find time for eating. Can we say, either, that He sits down to relax? Who can ever fathom His way? He has no rest, nor does He want any, such is His misfortune. And with all this, He never makes mistakes. This believer in swaraj has voluntarily forsworn the ability to make mistakes. If we but learnt something from Him, be it ever so little, swaraj would be ours in no time. Always silent, He is most active. Why do we not learn from Him that the best strength lies in silence? Let us leave the Government to its doings and its babbling and go on doing our duty—the duty of civil obedience and disobedience of law.

Meaning of Silence

This divine silence is no evidence of inertness, of the darkness of ignorance or of weakness. It signifies, rather, serenity, illu-

[1] Circumambulation of an object or person regarded as holy

mination of knowledge and dauntless courage. He who treats his body as mere stone and acts accordingly may sit motionless at one place and yet move the whole world. Will anyone want to hit a stone? You may crush it to powder, but it will never apologize, nor will it act and build a house for you. You will merely spend yourselves hitting at it. The more you hit it, the more obstinately it will refuse to work for you and build. Who can ever vanquish one whose body has been toughened in this way? In man, God and the stone meet. Man is but a stone endowed with consciousness, and so it is that the Shastras tell us that he alone is truly victorious who has subjugated his body. Silence, therefore, means subjugation of the body. If we have become slaves of the Government, it is because we have become slaves of our bodies, of physical comforts. We can throw off slavery if we can subjugate our bodies. We become free only to the extent that we shed our fond attachment to our bodies.

How can the Government suppress us? What could it do if we refused to avail ourselves of its benefits? If we can reject the riches it offers, the peace it has established and the comfort it has made possible, we can shake off our slavery this very day.

Silence in Practice

Not everyone, however, can observe complete silence, can train his body to have the toughness of stone. That is why we live in communities and, adding up small measures of silence, rest content with a little happiness. The way we have found for practising such modest subjugation of the body is that of swadeshi. There is no reason why everyone, whether young or old, cannot make even this small sacrifice, for a little spinning and weaving cannot be burdensome to anyone. The spinning-wheel is the symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity, the thing which brings home to us the fact of our being one, the people in Madras, the Kannadigas, the Bengalis, the Gujaratis, the Maharashtrians, the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Marwaris and the rest. Anyone who, knowing this, refuses to ply the spinning-wheel and yet talks of swaraj is a beggar begging for things to which he has no right. There can be no swaraj for beggars. Hence, those who aspire after it should, silently and ever repeating inwardly God's name in thoughtful devotion, spin golden yarn as an expression of their love of the country. Only when we see every Indian himself weaving yarn produced in his home or getting it woven by his neighbour and wearing exclusively cloth so made even as he eats only what is cooked at home, then shall we have swaraj, and not before.

Is there anyone who doubts that what I am suggesting is within the capacity even of a child? Nothing could be easier. We have needlessly made out the thing to be difficult and, having done so, feel helpless, suffer the ravages of famines, invite misery upon ourselves through our notions of untouchability and feel, that we, Hindus and Muslims, are mutual enemies.

A Doctor's Experience

There is a doctor in Hansot. He and his wife spin for not less than three hours daily. He learnt to spin only four months ago. After two months' practice, he was turning out yarn of 30 counts. In that period he had produced more than enough yarn for two long shirts. He now wears shirts made from this yarn. With great love, he made a present of the extra piece to me at Guntakal. I carry it with me and show it proudly everywhere. The doctor's wife spins yarn of even finer count. If he keeps up his effort, the doctor should be able to produce annually 36 yards of fine khadi. No man surely needs so much in a year.

Hoarding of Cotton

I should like to draw the reader's attention to the warning about cotton given by my friend, Laxmidas Purushottam. The prices of cotton, he says, have gone up and are still going up. Some say the increase in prices is the result of speculation in cotton. According to a close friend, the increase is due to a poor harvest of cotton in the U.S.A. The truth lies in the two explanations taken together. The bullish trend is due to both poor harvest in the U.S.A. and speculation. I had [let us suppose] 50 maunds of cotton till yesterday and, selling it at Rs. 22 a maund, I was making a profit of Rs. 4. Having come to know today about the poor harvest in the U.S.A., I raised the price from Rs. 22 to Rs. 38. How am I entitled to the additional Rs. 16? The whole world is being made to suffer through this perverse economics, a practice unworthy of a *Vanik*[1]. The science which tells us that America's need is our opportunity is a science not for men but for monsters. Swaraj is nothing but shaking ourselves free from the hold of this idea. Laxmidas has suggested how to do this in one field. Although prices have risen, everyone should at this time buy and store some cotton, no matter even if he or she does not know spinning. Every farmer, moreover, should be warned that under no circumstances should he sell his whole crop of cotton. He may sell the surplus if the crop exceeds his needs. He

[1] Member of the trading community

will be a short-sighted farmer who, tempted by the prospect of immediate gain, sells his entire crop. Every farmer should in fact store his requirements of grain and cotton, preferably for the whole year so that he can face one bad harvest at any rate.

I am not saying anything new. Our ancestors, who, far from being barbarians, were a civilized and intelligent people used to do exactly this 100 or 150 years ago. Many used to act in this way even as late as 30 years ago and counted themselves happy. We of today, short-sighted that we are, sell our cotton at a high price, waste our free time doing nothing and then buy cloth at higher prices and flatter ourselves as being civilized! I would call our "uncivilized" ancestors more sensible and far-sighted. I certainly wish that we stopped living according to our notions of how *Patidars*[1] should live and become real farmers.

The Ceded Districts

Some of his best territory which the Nizam handed over to the British Government and which is a part of the Telugu or Andhra region is known as the "Ceded Districts". My visit to that area was the last lap of my tour of the country. For three days and nights there, I practically did nothing but address public meetings. In these three days we covered Kalikiri, Chittoor, Tirupati, Renigunta, Razampet, Cuddapah, Tadpatri, Guntakal, Kurnool and Bellary. Most of these places are under partial or complete famine. The population of the Districts is some 28 lakhs. Starvation through famine has become so acute that some prefer to drown themselves with all members of their families. It is not that there is no grain in the market, but people do not have the money to buy it with nor do they have work which would earn them the money. Only a few can go and do the work, offered by the Government, of repairing public roads, which means carrying and breaking stones. In this work, women earn barely five pice and the men nine daily. Again, the wage may be three annas, but for every anna there is the inescapable commission of one pice to be made over to the supervisor. Thirty years ago the people of this District used to spin and weave, and even today the women have not lost the skill. In Tadpatri, I saw *Antyaja* women spinning with great facility in the Congress House. They make three annas for an eight-hour day, and there is no commission to be paid. No scoundrel can cast his evil eyes on them, and they make more than the men who work at breaking stones. Thousands of men and

[1] Community of farmers

women in the Ceded Districts blessed me for reviving the sacred work of spinning. If the respective Congress Committees of the different areas do good work, there will be no famine in the Ceded Districts next year. Prices may remain high but, through spinning and weaving, people will be able to make enough with which to buy food.

Malicious Government

A close friend points out that those who inveigh against non-co-operation seem to forget that all these years the Government has non-co-operated with our culture, our language and our race. We would be the biggest fools if we do not resort to non-co-operation against this system. A fresh example of the Government's non-co-operation even at the present day, and an example which reveals its meanness, is seen in its dealings with Mr. Godrej. This large-hearted gentleman has donated money to the Tilak Swaraj Fund earmarking the contribution for the uplift of the untouchables and for propaganda against drink. This provoked a secret circular from the Government to the effect that no Godrej safe should be ordered for any of its departments, which used to go in for numbers of them in the past. Because Mr. Godrej contributed to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, the "just" Government has boycotted his safes. How should the people deal with such a malicious and vindictive Government, if not by resorting to non-co-operation with it?

Diwali

Diwali is the day on which we celebrate Rama's victory, and Rama's victory is the victory of dharma. Diwali can, therefore, be properly celebrated only by one who follows dharma. Self-respecting and self-reliant people alone can celebrate it. Till we have won swaraj, I deem it our dharma to abstain, during Diwali days, from merry-making and feasting. I fail to understand how, at a time when hundreds of innocent men are in jails for the sake of their dharma and their country, we can indulge in any pleasures at all. Can anyone whose brother gets nothing better in jail than thick cakes of *bajra* to eat feast on *shrikhand* outside? Is anyone whose brothers and sisters are starving without food likely to think of dances and parties? We generally buy "dazzling" foreign cloth for Diwali. I suggest that nobody should buy a single piece of cloth which he does not need and, if one must, one should buy hand-spun khadi, though even this sparingly.

Ali Brothers' Companion

Even in jail the Ali Brothers think of the spinning-wheel. A telegram from them says that they and their companions in jail have asked for some spinning-wheels to be supplied to them, so that they could spend their free time in spinning! If all of us were as conscientious as this, we should certainly get swaraj very soon. It remains to be seen how the Government treats this request.

About "Antyajas"

We should now ask ourselves what we have been doing for the *Antyajas* in Gujarat. Is every Congress Committee doing something in the matter? The Committee in Tadpatri has provided work to *Antyaja* women on its own premises. People are free to mix with them, and they with people. We can, in this and many other ways, demonstrate that *Antyaja* men and women are our own brothers and sisters. Only, we need to be serious about the matter. How many wells have we dug for them? How many new schools have been opened for them? How do we ourselves treat them at home? Do we give them left-overs to eat? This last question should particularly engage the attention of women. Removal of untouchability does not mean merely that we no longer take a bath on coming into contact with an *Antyaja*, believing ourselves polluted by such contact. We should, rather, think over the meaning of this practice and rid ourselves completely of the terrible contempt which lies behind it. Till we have done this, untouchability will persist. Its disappearance is bound to be felt by every *Antyaja* man and woman.

Outrage in Name of Religion

Tomorrow is the last day of *Navaratri*[1]. Last year the officiating priest in the temple of Bhadrakali was prevented by the *mahajans*[2] from sacrificing a goat to the Goddess. An understanding was arrived at under which the latter agreed to pay him Rs. 600 every year, and the priest was to perform other ceremonies but refrain from sacrificing a goat.

This year the priest says that he is not bound by the previous year's agreement. If he says this, he is guilty of one more sin, that of breaking one's pledged word.

[1] The first nine days of the bright half of *Asvina*, which generally fall in October

[2] Associations of traders

I understand that a stay order forbidding the priest from sacrificing a goat is likely to be issued. We should not, however, be concerned at all whether such an order is issued or not.

Those who regarded themselves as Hindus can never be a party to such a sacrifice. I am firmly of the view that it is the negation of dharma to sacrifice any animal in the name of religion. The place in which such sacrifices are made can be no temple, and a Hindu can never think of visiting it. Mother Kali demands no animal sacrifices. If anything, she wants us to sacrifice ourselves. It is only by slaying our sins, our evil, that we can make ourselves fit to stand before her. To those Hindus who desire to offer a sacrifice on the eighth day, I suggest that they should, dressed in handspun khadi, take a pledge to follow truth, practise non-violence and strive to subjugate the body. Anyone who does so will certainly be offering the purest sacrifice and such a person will also have become fit for swaraj. I, therefore, hope that, should the priest be obstinate and stick to his intention to kill a goat, no Hindu will visit the temple and be a party to the sin of offering the sacrifice and thus blaspheme against God.

Saturday, Aso Sud 7 [*October 8, 1921*]

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-10-1921

122. SPEECH ON WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Mrs. Naidu presided at the meeting and Mahatma Gandhi moved the resolution before the meeting, supported by the various leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Azad Sobhani, Babu Rajendra Lal, etc. . . . After the resolution, which was similar to that of the Karachi Resolution, was passed all standing, the Mahatma lighted the heap of foreign clothing and it burned on merrily amidst the loud noise of crackers and bursting flames. . .

Mahatma Gandhi moved:

This meeting of the citizens of Bombay re-affirms the following resolution of the Working Committee held in Bombay on the 5th instant:

The Working Committee congratulates the Ali Brothers and their comrades upon their prosecution and having considered the Resolution of the Khilafat Conference held at Karachi, regarding Military Service under

the Government, the Working Committee is of opinion that the Resolution virtually reaffirms the principle laid down by the Congress at its special session in Calcutta, and its ordinary session in Nagpur last year, that it is contrary to national dignity and national interest for any Indian to engage or remain in the service of a Government in any capacity whatsoever; a Government that has used the soldiers for the purposes of crushing the national spirit of the Egyptians, the Turks, the Arabs and other nations. The Working Committee has been only deterred from calling out the soldiers and the civilians in the name of the Congress because the Congress is not yet ready to support these Government servants who may leave Government service and who may not be able themselves to find means of livelihood. The Working Committee, however, is of opinion that in pursuance of the spirit of the Congress Resolution on non-co-operation it is the clear duty of every Government employee, whether soldier or civilian, who can support himself without Congress assistance to leave such service.

The Working Committee draws the attention of all Indian soldiers and police to the fact that carding and hand-spinning and hand-weaving afford them, by undergoing training for a brief period, an honourable means for independent livelihood. The Working Committee is further of opinion that the reasons given for the prosecution with reference to the said Karachi Resolution constitute an undue interference with religious liberty.

In proposing the resolution Mahatma Gandhi said it divided itself into two parts. The first part dealt with the Karachi Resolution and was intended to be its confirmation from the national standpoint. And if it was a crime in the Ali Brothers and their fellow-prisoners to have supported the Resolution, it was a crime for the speaker and the audience to propose and pass the resolution. He considered it their duty to state their position clearly. It was their duty to inform the sepoy that it was wrong to help a Government which had forfeited the confidence of the country. The speaker was informed that the resolution was said to be worded cleverly after the fashion of a lawyer so as to avoid the clutches of the law. It was said that, like the Khilafat Resolution, the present one did not require everyone to tell the sepoy to lay down arms. He differed from that view. He was of opinion that by the resolution everyone endorsing it told the sepoy that it was his duty to give up service if only he could support himself otherwise. If his voice could reach the sepoy he certainly told him that if he believed in his faith whether he was a Hindu or a Mussulman or believed in his own country, he should leave the service even if he had to earn his livelihood by breaking stones. One who wanted to be a soldier of India could not be a sepoy of a Government which has served against India. Those who murdered the innocent men of Jallianwala were no soldiers; they were mere animals. Those who ran no risks, but only killed were again no

soldiers but animals. He had, therefore, no hesitation in telling the sepoy through the audience that he should lose no time in severing his connection with the Government if he cared for his country and religion.

One thing the resolution did not require the people to do namely to carry on secret propaganda. They had ruled out secrecy from their book of non-co-operation. They were ashamed to say in secret what they were not prepared to say in public. If therefore the Government held it a crime to recite the creed of non-co-operation, he invited them to arrest those who took part in the evening's proceedings. If it was a crime to tell the soldier that it was unlawful for him to serve the Government in terms of his religion and nationalism, he (the speaker) invited Government to arrest him and those who supported and carried the resolution.

The other part of the resolution pointed out to the soldier the way to an honourable livelihood. It referred to swadeshi. He asked the audience not to carry that resolution if they did not believe in swadeshi and the power of the spinning-wheel to banish poverty from the land. The resolution told the soldier that he could earn his living by carding and weaving. He verily believed with Maulana Mahomed Ali that they did not need lead and gunpowder. Yarn balls were their lead and the spinning-wheel was their gun. He said last September that it was possible to gain swaraj, to redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs during the twelve months following if they fulfilled certain conditions. Twelve months had passed but there was no swaraj. The fault was theirs. They had done much but had not fulfilled the minimum required. He wished to share the blame.

He was sorry that he had not the power of convincing every lawyer that it was wrong to practise before the courts which gave no justice. He was sorry that his *tapasya* was not enough to carry conviction to every student that it was wrong to belong to Government schools. He knew that he had not been able to convince every man and woman of Bombay that it was sinful to wear anything but khaddar. But they need not mind him. If the country still carried out the swadeshi programme during the month, swaraj was a certainty during the year and so was redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. He adhered to his faith in the spinning-wheel. He had no doubt that it and it alone could solve the problem of India's poverty. Its acceptance, to him, was a test of the reality of Hindu-Muslim unity and [of freedom] from violence. He would not be party to general civil disobedience if they could not fulfil the swadeshi programme. He would not be satisfied unless khaddar had become universal; foreign cloth a rarity. He wanted to see the men and women of Bombay to be dressed in khaddar only. He was told that the sale of khaddar was to the extent of Rs. 18,000 in July, Rs. 13,000 in August and Rs. 7,000 in September in Khadi Bhandar. He wanted to see lakhs worth of khadi sold. He wanted to see the spinning-wheel at work in every house in Bombay. Bombay had led in the matter of Tilak Swaraj Fund. Let Bombay lead in

swadeshi and gain the privilege of offering general civil disobedience. He had erred in the April of 1919 in hastily embarking on civil disobedience. He was a very imperfect human being, liable to err. God alone was free from error. But he was knowing enough not to err twice about the same thing. He could not advise civil disobedience without swadeshi. He knew the science of civil disobedience. He knew its power and its risks. A completely non-violent atmosphere was a necessity, and it could not be ensured unless the nation had recognized the power of the spinning-wheel and settled down to it. If they believed in swadeshi and its results, he expected to see a spinning-wheel at work in every home, he expected all castes and creeds to take up the spinning-wheel and khaddar. He expected princely men to take to charkha and the mill-hands to take up the spinning-wheel. And when they had done that they would safely go to individual soldier and openly ask him to give up his service.

He had found many shedding tears to see him reducing his dress to a mere loin-cloth. He could not do otherwise after having witnessed what he had. He wanted no pity for himself but he did want India, if he was to revert to his normal dress, to adopt full swadeshi. He had visited the Ceded Districts. It was going through a famine—women were reported to have drowned themselves and their children for want of food. It was not possible for him to wear more clothing than he did after knowing such deep distress.

He would presently put the torch to the pyramid of clothing in front of them. To him it was a symbol of the fire raging in their breasts. This burning was a mere show unless it was a replica of internal fire.

They revered the memory of the Lokamanya. They need not go to his commentary on the *Gita* to learn Tilak *Gita*. The speaker could tell them what it was in one word. The first half was supplied by the Lokamanya himself viz, "Swaraj is our birthright". He would supply the second half. The spinning-wheel is the means to attain it. He was sure that if the deceased had been alive, he would be on the same platform with them. Was he not a lover of swadeshi? Had he not practised it as it was then practised for years? He, the speaker, knew that the deceased believed in non-co-operation. He certainly doubted the country's ability to follow it up. Let them remove the doubt and by complete rehabilitation of swadeshi establish swaraj during the year. He invited the Mussulmans who felt so deeply for the Khilafat and the Hindus who felt equally for the cow to take up the spinning-wheel and ensure the success of swadeshi.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-10-1921

123. SPEECH TO WOMEN, BOMBAY

October 9, 1921

Under the auspices of the Rashtriya Stree Sabha a public meeting of women was held on Sunday afternoon at the Marwari Vidyalaya Hall, when Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai and others spoke on "The Present Situation". The meeting was for ladies dressed in khaddar and swadeshi clothes alone. Mrs. Naidu presided.

Mahatma Gandhi said before him were sitting Hindu, Mohammedan and Parsi women. They had come there, knowing well that they had to attend in khaddar dress only. He personally had come there not to tell them anything new, but to give them an account of the country's doings. By becoming members of the Congress they had shown their willingness to follow its mandates, come what might. They knew that eight of their country's leaders had been arrested in Karachi for passing certain resolutions and he wanted the meeting to pass those very resolutions and to go to jail if necessary. They should not think that because they were women they would not; that was wrong. They must know that the Government would do anything to gain their object. They knew from what had happened in South Africa that the Government were not willing to leave their women free. Lala Lajpat Rai had asked them to steel their hearts so that they might not shed a single tear when their nearest and dearest were arrested. They had to follow the example of the mother of the Ali Brothers and Maulana Mahomed Ali's wife. Although none of their religions taught them to weep for the dead, still they did weep and mourn for their dead relations. That was wrong. They should not mourn for those who were sent to jail, because they knew that they were fighting for dharma raj, for swaraj. The swaraj he wanted to establish was dharma raj, it was Rama raj. So long as a single Indian was starved to death, whatever rights they might get in the parliament, real swaraj was not theirs; so long as there was godlessness in the country, what was the use of getting rights and votes. He wanted dharma raj, a raj based on all that was good and virtuous. They would get that only when they were resolved upon getting it. Lalaji had already told them that they should not shed a single tear ever if their leaders were hung by their necks by their Government. He hoped that the women would do that and never forsake their dharma.

Coming to the question of swadeshi, Mahatma Gandhi said he saw before him many women who were not wearing even swadeshi clothes; some of them were wearing mill-made clothes. He asked them whether they had emptied their boxes of all their foreign clothes. They must also remember that mill-made clothing was for the poorest of the poor and not for the well-to-do like

those present there. They must only wear those clothes which they had made with their own hands. Formerly people were known by the dress they wore and a man's worth was assessed by his clothes. That mentality they should change in these days. He had been to see a village called Dattamandal in the Nizam's dominions and he saw there people starving for the last four years on account of famine. Those men and women had no work to do and they were slowly dying, starving. If he but told the audience what he had seen in that place they would cry for mere shame. People were dying uncared for. He regretted much that although he had been preaching to them swadeshi for the last one year not much progress was done. He had seen in this country men, women and children dying of hunger—mere bags of bones, mere skeletons—because they had no work to do. They were ready to do any work, but they were unable to do it for there was none for them. Sometimes Government was employing them to break stones on the road sides. Seeing all these things, how could Indians, men and women, clothe themselves in fineries? If they wanted to abolish poverty from this land, and abolish nakedness, then they must use the charkha. Crores of their people would then be able to get their living by keeping their self-respect. If Indians would accomplish this, swaraj was theirs. Indians had no right to waste their money in luxuries and also waste their time. Whatever they saved they must give to the poor. God was to be found in the houses of the poor, of the *Chandalas*, of *Dheds* and of *Bhangis* and not in the houses of the rich and the great. He would only pray to God that if he should be born in this land he might be born a *Dhed*. The boycott of courts, the boycott of schools, the giving up of titles, boycotting of the councils—all those had not been done successfully and people had failed in their duty towards the country. The time was for the women to act now. They had to use the charkha with a view to get victory. Without dharma they would never get swaraj, they would never be able to right the wrongs of the Punjab, and they would never get their Khilafat wrongs righted. If they could achieve swadeshi nothing would be able to stop them from their goal. If they had the necessary virtues for the swaraj, which they were striving for, no government would be able to stop them from their goal. The time was short. They had failed to achieve swaraj before the end of last month, and would they have the necessary *shraddha*, the necessary faith? The charkha was their only means now. In conclusion he asked them to cast off their foreign clothing, use khaddar and adopt the charkha as their weapon for fighting for swaraj.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-10-1921

124. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, SURAT[1]

October 12, 1921

Mahatmaji addressed the audience for about half an hour and exhorted the people to concentrate their attention on swadeshi only. He said he knew Surat and Surat knew him. He had heard very good reports about Surat during his recent tour, and the sea of white caps before him was not surprising to him. He was, however, pained to find his sisters of Surat yet not taking to khaddar. If, he said, swaraj was to be established through Gujarat, and if Surat was to lead, much yet remained to be done within the short period of two months and a half.

Good work was no doubt done by Surat till then, but yet much remained to be done. Swadeshi must permeate every particle of their blood. It ought to be realized that it was a sin to touch foreign cloth. Mahatmaji said he had explained and said all he had to say and explain up till then. Swadeshi was the only work now to be done. For perfect peace, for Hindu-Muslim unity, for relief to the poor and the famine-stricken, for the chastity of the women, there was but one thing, viz, the charkha. Khaddar cap or a coat for the meeting only was not enough, though that was something. He was now thinking of economizing his time and energy and instead of wasting words was going to employ himself whole-heartedly in khaddar-production only. That would be a better service to the country. He then explained why he adopted the present change in his dress and took only to the loin-cloth. He wanted to set an example, when so many of his own countrymen and women were going naked. Hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar was the need of the hour, and if Surat alone did this no civil disobedience will have to be resorted to. They should give up all processions and even meetings. Time was to be spared for spinning and weaving. That was more eloquent than his own speech. He was going to set the example shortly. His message to Surat was swadeshi and swadeshi alone. Time though short was enough for the honest and determined persons. This was a religious crusade and they could not cheat God. To Hindus he especially pointed out the sin and curse of untouchability. God would not forgive them if untouchability remained. God hears these six crores of untouchables and he has consequently made their oppressors untouchables to the rest of the world.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1921

[1] On the bank of the Tapti near the historic old castle

125. *NOTES*

All about the Brothers

It is the good fortune of the Brothers to have staunch friends. It is equally their good fortune to have strong critics. A friend writes to me that I am so infatuated with them that I refuse to see anything bad in them. He is right. It is the privilege of friendship not to be suspicious. But he is a bad friend who does not know his friend's weaknesses. I know those of the Brothers, but having weaknesses myself I am tender towards theirs. I feel that they are the best and the bravest among co-workers with whom I have had the privilege of working. So much for the general charge.

Their Inconsistency

But here is a particular charge against them. Says a correspondent:

> May I put before you the following problems, which I have even after a very long and deep deliberation been unable to reconcile with the non-co-operation doctrine. Will you kindly say whether my difficulties are something real or only superficial?
>
> Non-co-operation requires that no accused should give any help whatsoever to the proceedings in the British court in which he is tried. But, is not the statement given by the Ali Brothers, a sort of help given to the court? This the Crown Prosecutor himself made clear, when he said that his work was much lightened by the utterances of the accused.
>
> . . .
>
> The second problem which perplexes me is this. We have not as yet launched on civil disobedience. Hence we all must obey at present the orders of the British officials. Even you did not infringe the order which prohibited you from entering Malabar. If so, was it proper for Maulana Mahomed Ali to disobey the Magistrate of Karachi and lose temper with him, when he asked him to sit down? Was this not an express breach of the Magistrate's order? Was it creditable to Maulana Mahomed Ali to ask the Magistrate whether he did not believe in God, and to decline to sit down when asked to do so and say, "Let me see what you can do"?
>
> To my mind, even when civil disobedience is started, we all must be humble. A non-co-operator must be humility incarnate. He must never under any provocation whatsoever lose temper or show any force.

He must not know impudence except in name only. If these remarks be just, this action of the Ali Brothers is wholly unjustifiable, and may well be reckoned as a piece of impudence, pardon me for using this word.

I think it would have been far better, far more prudent and worthy of leaders like the Ali Brothers to have remained tongue-tied, as it were, in the court instead of helping it in any way or behaving with the authorities impetuously.

I know this last remark may cause unpleasantness to you. If so, I solicit your pardon, but I could not help making this remark. I know you would justify the Brothers' action anyhow, but how, I know not.

The letter is frank but well meant. Many friends have put the same questions to me, and I have endeavoured to satisfy them to the best of my ability. But the foregoing letter requires public treatment. If there is inconsistency, it is due to the All-India Congress Committee which has permitted statements. One may question the soundness of the Committee's decision, but one may not charge the Brothers with inconsistency.

The All-India Congress Committee based its decision upon my advice. I owe it perhaps to the public to give my reasons. The statement enables the accused to declare his own position, and if it is made before the court, it is permanently on record. Moreover I have faith in India's ability to win swaraj during the year. I expect tens of thousands to be in jail before swaraj is established. I expect the swaraj parliament to discharge all non-co-operation prisoners who have not been proved guilty of moral crimes. The statements will be a valuable aid to the judges under swaraj. Again I am most anxious, that criminals do not take advantage of non-co-operation and making no statement leave the public to infer their innocence. A statement to satisfy this test must always be brief, to the point and not at all argumentative.

Maulana Mahomed Ali's statement does not fall under that category. He entered into a long and elaborate dissertation of the law of Islam. He evidently "used" the court not for defence but for advertising the cause. People have read his statement before the court with avidity. If he had written it as an essay, it would have fallen flat. I am therefore prepared neither to condemn nor defend the statement.

It could certainly have been much briefer. But it has become impossible for Maulana Mahomed Ali to be brief. I have known him to take an hour over his speech under a promise of being brief!

The second charge is more serious. In the refusal to sit down, there was no question of civil or uncivil disobedience. But it was a question of taste. All the scenes jarred on me. There was certainly no impudence but there was unnecessary defiance. I admit that a non-co-operator should be all humility. And the behaviour of the prisoners was far from humble.

But I have again been unable to condemn the behaviour of the prisoners. They have answered a purpose and not a bad purpose at that. We are much cowed down. The courts have an overawing atmosphere about them. Respect for law and the courts is one thing. Fear of them is another. In my opinion the Brothers and their fellow-prisoners were out for mischief. They wanted to rob the courts and prisons of their terror. They therefore deliberately hurled defiance at the court. If the magistrate had entered into the humour of the situation, the Brothers would not have been assertive as they were. The court wanted to stand on dignity. The Brothers would have none of it. I do not deny that there was a better way, but I verily believe that the Brothers have rendered a service to the cause even by their defence[1]. They could have damaged the cause by putting on humility. They have once more proved themselves to be truthful and natural. That to me is their most lovable trait. We must remember, that we do want the present courts brought into disrepute because we believe them to be disreputable. But whilst I cannot condemn the Brothers' defiance, I do not present it as a pattern to copy. Those who try will fail. For let me tell the reader, that the Brothers have no feeling against the magistrate, and I have no doubt that they are as courteous to the magistrate when he is off the Bench as they are to me.

An Eye Witness

The reader will perhaps better judge the scene from the following letter received from an eye witness.

> You must have read the proceedings of the case in the Press, but I consider it my duty to write to you the impressions of a silent spectator. At the very outset an attempt was made to snub the "Hero" accused, but the unfortunate Mr. Magistrate was facing none else, but Maulana Mahomed Ali. The gentleman had his "well-merited rebuke".
>
> I confess that it was for the second time in my life that I entered a court to hear a case. . . . The so-called court of justice of Lord Read-

[1] Misprint for "defiance"; *vide* "Notes", 27-10-1921 under the sub-title "In Defence of Mr. Tyabji".

ing's regime in a country governed by law and order is in no way better than a theatre.

Sir, I am wrong. The actors in a theatre play their part honestly to please the spectators who pay for their amusement. But the "Daniel" of the British Court, whether white or black, knows no such thing as fair play, and I am confident that justice is not the word in their dictionary.

I am not a lawyer, so I could not follow the technical irregularities of the case, but if law has anything to do with common sense, then I can dare to say that the whole show in the Khaliqdina Hall was one great farce . . .

It was amusing to hear the witnesses and the way in which the conspiracy was being proved, and the speech made by the Government counsel in summing up the case hardly needs any comment.

I have personally come to the conclusion, that the making of a statement also in these courts is nothing but a cry in the wilderness, unless it be to serve the purpose of propaganda in the form of a last appeal to the countrymen.

A Contrast

The following letter from Bulandshahr will still further elucidate the point I am trying to make.

I have to bring to your notice the most unbecoming action of the District Magistrate during the course of a political trial which began on the 3rd instant.

Mahashaya Mahavir Prasad Tyagi[1] was prosecuted . . . in the court of Mr. Dobbs, the District Magistrate. . . . When the examination-in-chief of the witness was over, the Court asked the accused if he wanted to cross-examine the witness. Thereupon the accused said that he did not. He only wanted to have the fact noted, that the English translation of the notes[2] did not tally with the original as frankly admitted by the Government pleader before the Court. . . . The Magistrate declined to make the note and said, "You speak nonsense"[3]. The accused was offended at the remark and retorted, "I suppose it is yours". Thereupon the Magistrate ordered Balwant Singh, constable No. 55 who was in charge of the accused to slap him. The constable hesitated and most unwillingly gave the accused a light stroke on the back side of his neck. Thereupon the District Magistrate again ordered him to give a sharp slap on the face which he did when so forced to do. The accused patiently suffered the insult and humiliation. The accused was all along undefended. . . .

[1] b. 1899; member, A.I.C.C. since 1923

[2] Of the speech delivered by the accused

[3] According to Mahavir Tyagi, the Magistrate actually said: "It is your folly".

> The extreme action of the District Magistrate has created a strong sense of excitement and indignation amongst the public here. . . . A mass meeting . . . was held . . . and appropriate resolutions passed. . . .

The resolutions passed at the public meeting held in Bulandshahr congratulate the accused on his self-control, bravery and resignation. But I have grave doubts as to the propriety of the use of the adjectives. Why did not the accused utter a word of protest? Why did he not refuse to be tried by the so-called Magistrate? The Magistrate clearly committed a crime, and so did the unwilling constable. Did the accused remain dumb because of love and humility? Silence or passivity must not be used as a cloak for fear or worse. Was not the attitude of the Brothers more manly and natural? There are occasions such as the one at Bulandshahr, when a man's own strength must be his sole protection. And I have no doubt, that the Brothers, when they defied the court, had in mind the political debility of their countrymen.

Hindustani in Courts

Dr. Kichlew deserves congratulations for his having declined to speak in English. Save on rare occasions we should certainly insist on giving evidence before the courts in our mother tongue. The best of us are at a disadvantage, when we have to speak or argue in English. And if all refused to use any but their own language, we should soon get rid of translators, and the judges will be obliged to *know* the language of the province in which they serve. In no other part of the world are judges ignorant of the language of the people among whom they dispense justice.

Cause of Decay

A correspondent asks, "Is it not true that the loss of Hindu kingdoms is on account of the people having attained to the highest order of spirituality?" I do not think so. We know as a matter of fact, that the Hindus have lost each time for want of spirituality, in other words moral stamina. The Rajputs fought amongst themselves for trifles and lost India. Of personal bravery there was a great deal, but of real spirituality there was a great dearth at the time. Why did Ravana lose and Rama with his monkeys win if it was not for the latter's spirituality? Did not the Pandavas win because of their superior spirituality? We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart-culture, of immeasur-

able strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral.

The Root Cause

The same correspondent further asks, "Don't you think that the success of the present foreign Government is due to the oppression of the poor, the weak, of the so-called untouchables by the higher classes?" This oppression by us of our own kith and kin is certainly the root cause. It is a fall from spirituality. The curse of foreign domination and the attendant exploitation is the justest retribution meted out by God to us for our exploitation of a sixth of our own race and their studied degradation in the sacred name of religion. Hence it is that I have put the removal of untouchability as an indispensable condition of attainment of swaraj. Slave-holders ourselves, we have no business to quarrel with our own slavery if we are not prepared unconditionally to enfranchise our own slaves. We must first cast out the beam of untouchability from our own eye before we attempt to remove the mote from that of our "masters".

Even against Women

Mrs. Sengupta is a cultured Englishwoman married to a cultured Bengali. Whilst Mr. Sengupta[1] was under arrest, Mrs. Sengupta went out to the cloth bazar in Chittagong to tell the consumers to buy khadi and avoid foreign cloth. This was a serious offence for a woman to commit, and therefore she received a notice under Section 144 ordering her to desist. She has obeyed the notice because of the Congress embargo. Whatever may be said of men, Mrs. Sengupta could not be suspected of any intention to create trouble or offer any intimidation. Her inspiring presence would no doubt have shamed buyers into abstaining from going to foreign-cloth dealers. And that would have been bad from the Magistrate's standpoint. The order, therefore, is a virtual prohibition against swadeshi propaganda. But it will not surprise me in the least, if this Government, which chiefly rules to protect merchandise in foreign cloth, must end when foreign cloth is boycotted. The Government must grow madder with the progress of real swadeshi.

Echo from Gauhati

What has happened in Chittagong has been copied in Gauhati. There the workers have been prohibited from peacefully warning

[1] A leading barrister of Bengal

consumers against making purchases of foreign cloth for the Puja holidays. The order is issued against

> all persons within Gauhati Municipality to abstain from intimidating or causing annoyance to all persons engaged in sale or purchase of goods by threats or shouts or gestures or show of force, to abstain from loitering in the public roads or in the neighbourhood of shops or markets for purposes aforesaid, to abstain from doing other or any such acts as are likely to cause annoyance to persons lawfully engaged or disturbance of public tranquility.

Mr. Bardoloi who has wired the text adds, "This is only a device to stop peaceful picketing".

The Remedy

I would advise workers to be chary of cloth-picketing except when it becomes imperatively necessary. But when it does, the Working Committee has now given leave to disregard orders like the Chittagong and Gauhati ones, and fearlessly continue picketing, and court imprisonment. Prisons will be palaces, when we fill them for swadeshi which is the oxygen of national life.

Young India, 13-10-1921

126. THE GREAT SENTINEL

The Bard of Shantiniketan has contributed to *The Modern Review* a brilliant essay[1] on the present movement. It is a series of word pictures which he alone can paint. It is an eloquent protest against authority, slave-mentality or whatever description one gives of blind acceptance of a passing mania whether out of fear or hope. It is a welcome and wholesome reminder to all workers that we must not be impatient, we must not impose authority no matter how great. The poet tells us summarily to reject anything and everything that does not appeal to our reason or heart. If we would gain swaraj, we must stand for truth as we know it at any cost. A reformer who is enraged because his message is not accepted must retire to the forest to learn how to watch, wait and pray. With all this one must heartily agree, and the Poet deserves the thanks of his countrymen for standing up for truth and reason. There is no doubt that our last state will be worse than our first, if we surrender our reason into somebody's keeping. And I would feel extremely sorry to discover, that the country had un-

[1] "The Call of Truth" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue

thinkingly and blindly followed all I had said or done. I am quite conscious of the fact that blind surrender to love is often more mischievous than a forced surrender to the lash of the tyrant. There is hope for the slave of the brute, none for that of love. Love is needed to strengthen the weak, love becomes tyrannical when it exacts obedience from an unbeliever. To mutter a *mantra* without knowing its value is unmanly. It is good, therefore, that the Poet has invited all who are slavishly *mimicking* the call of the charkha boldly to declare their revolt. His essay serves as a warning to us all who in our impatience are betrayed into intolerance or even violence against those who differ from us. I regard the Poet as a sentinel warning us against the approach of enemies called bigotry, lethargy, intolerance, ignorance, inertia and other members of that brood.

But whilst I agree with all that the Poet has said as to the necessity of watchfulness lest we cease to think, I must not be understood to endorse the proposition that there is any such blind obedience on a large scale in the country today. I have again and again appealed to reason, and let me assure him, that if happily the country has come to believe in the spinning-wheel as the giver of plenty, it has done so after laborious thinking, after great hesitation. I am not sure, that even now educated India has assimilated the truth underlying the charkha. He must not mistake the surface dirt for the substance underneath. Let him go deeper and see for himself whether the charkha has been accepted from blind faith or from reasoned necessity.

I do indeed ask the Poet and the page to spin the wheel as a sacrament. When there is war, the poet lays down the lyre, the lawyer his law reports, the schoolboy his books. The Poet will sing the true note after the war is over, the lawyer will have occasion to go to his law books when people have time to fight among themselves. When a house is on fire, all the inmates go out, and each one takes up a bucket to quench the fire. When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry. It is my conviction that India is a house on fire, because its manhood is being daily scorched, it is dying of hunger because it has no work to buy food with. Khulna is starving not because the people cannot work, but because they have no work. The Ceded Districts are passing successively through a fourth famine, Orissa is a land suffering from chronic famines. Our cities are not India. India lives in her seven and a half lakhs of villages, and the cities live upon the villages. They do not bring their wealth from other countries. The

city people are brokers and commission agents for the big houses of Europe, America and Japan. The cities have co-operated with the latter in the bleeding process that has gone on for the past two hundred years. It is my belief based on experience, that India is daily growing poorer. The circulation about her feet and legs has almost stopped. And if we do not take care, she will collapse altogether.

To a people famishing and idle, the only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and promise of food as wages. God created man to work for his food, and said that those who ate without work were thieves. Eighty per cent of India are compulsorily thieves half the year. Is it any wonder if India has become one vast prison? Hunger is the argument that is driving India to the spinning-wheel. The call of the spinning-wheel is the noblest of all. Because it is the call of love. And love is swaraj. The spinning-wheel will "curb the mind" when the time spent on necessary physical labour can be said to do so. We must think of millions who are today less than animals, who are almost in a dying state. The spinning-wheel is the reviving draught for the millions of our dying countrymen and countrywomen. "Why should I, who have no need to work for food, spin?" may be the question asked. Because I am eating what does not belong to me. I am living on the spoliation of my countrymen. Trace the course of every pice that finds its way into your pocket, and you will realize the truth of what I write. Swaraj has no meaning for the millions if they do not know how to employ their enforced idleness. The attainment of this swaraj is possible within a short time, and it is so possible only by the revival of the spinning-wheel.

I do want growth, I do want self-determination, I do want freedom, but I want all these for the soul. I doubt if the steel age is an advance upon the flint age. I am indifferent. It is the evolution of the soul to which the intellect and all our faculties have to be devoted. I have no difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man armoured after the modern style making some lasting and new discovery for mankind, but I have less difficulty in imagining the possibility of a man having nothing but a bit of flint and a nail for lighting his path or his matchlock, ever singing new hymns of praise and delivering to an aching world a message of peace and goodwill upon earth. A plea for the spinning-wheel is a plea for recognizing the dignity of labour.

I claim that in losing the spinning-wheel we lost our left lung. We are therefore suffering from galloping consumption. The restoration of the wheel arrests the progress of the fell disease.

There are certain things which all must do in all climes. There are certain things which all must do in certain climes. The spinning-wheel is the thing which all must turn in the Indian clime for the transition stage at any rate and the vast majority must for all time.

It was our love of foreign cloth that ousted the wheel from its position of dignity. Therefore I consider it a sin to wear foreign cloth. I must confess that I do not draw a sharp or any distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurt the moral well-being of an individual or a nation are immoral and therefore sinful. Thus the economics that permit one country to prey upon another are immoral. It is sinful to buy and use articles made by sweated labour. It is sinful to eat American wheat and let my neighbour the grain-dealer starve for want of custom. Similarly it is sinful for me to wear the latest finery of Regent Street, when I know that if I had but worn the things woven by the neighbouring spinners and weavers, that would have clothed me, and fed and clothed them. On the knowledge of my sin bursting upon me, I must consign the foreign garments to the flames and thus purify myself, and thenceforth rest content with the rough khadi made by my neighbours. On knowing that my neighbours may not, having given up the occupation, take kindly to the spinning-wheel, I must take it up myself and thus make it popular.

I venture to suggest to the Poet, that the clothes I ask him to burn must be and are his. If they had to his knowledge belonged to the poor or the ill-clad, he would long ago have restored to the poor what was theirs. In burning *my* foreign clothes I burn my shame. I must refuse to insult the naked by giving them clothes they do not need, instead of giving them work which they sorely need. I will not commit the sin of becoming their patron, but on learning that I had assisted in impoverishing them, I would give them a privileged position and give them neither crumbs nor cast-off clothing, but the best of my food and clothes and associate myself with them in work.

Nor is the scheme of non-co-operation or swadeshi an exclusive doctrine. My modesty has prevented me from declaring from the house-top that the message of non-co-operation, non-violence and swadeshi is a message to the world. It must fall flat, if it does not bear fruit in the soil where it has been delivered. At the present moment India has nothing to share with the world save her degradation, pauperism and plagues. Is it her ancient Shastras that we should send to the world? Well, they are printed

in many editions, and an incredulous and idolatrous world refuses to look at them, because we the heirs and custodians do not live them. Before, therefore, I can think of sharing with the world, I must possess. Our non-co-operation is neither with the English nor with the West. Our non-co-operation is with the system the English have established, with the material civilization and its attendant greed and exploitation of the weak. Our non-co-operation is a retirement within ourselves. Our non-co-operation is a refusal to co-operate with the English administrators on their own terms. We say to them, "Come and co-operate with us on our terms, and it will be well for us, for you and the world." We must refuse to be lifted off our feet. A drowning man cannot save others. In order to be fit to save others, we must try to save ourselves. Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian. India must learn to live before she can aspire to die for humanity. The mice which helplessly find themselves between the cat's teeth acquire no merit from their enforced sacrifice.

True to his poetical instinct the Poet lives for the morrow and would have us do likewise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds early in the morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. These birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flown during the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. It is an indescribably painful state which has to be experienced to be realized. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir. The hungry millions ask for one poem—invigorating food. They cannot be given it. They must earn it. And they can earn only by the sweat of their brow. . . .[1]

In these verses is contained for me the whole truth of the spinning-wheel as an indispensable sacrament for the India of today. If we will take care of today, God will take care of the morrow.

Young India, 13-10-1921

[1] Here followed in the source verses 8 to 16 from the *Bhagavad Gita*, Ch. III. For their English rendering, *vide* "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-title "The Charkha in the *Gita*".

127. *WHAT WILL BOMBAY DO?*

The first bonfire of foreign cloth was lighted by me in Bombay on 31st July. The second bonfire, of the same magnitude, was lighted last Sunday. The 31st of July was also a Sunday.

It was Bombay which displayed generosity and upheld the country's honour, completing the target for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Bombay has laid the foundation for swadeshi. Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity were discussed for the first time at the mammoth meeting for satyagraha held on the Chowpatty sands.

There are both Hindus and Muslims in Bombay; it is the principal centre of the spirited Parsis. Bombay has worthy Gujaratis and, tough, mountain-bred Marathas. It has also merchant-warriors, Memons, Bhatias, Parsis and Sindhis. The Bombay people are enterprising. They make a fortune one moment and lose it the next and give no thought to the matter.

Bombay has strength enough to win swaraj, if only it would use that strength.

It is now accepted on all hands that swadeshi is the key to swaraj.

The help of merchants and women is necessary for winning the battle of swadeshi.

Merchants in other regions have not taken the same interest in the swaraj movement as those in Bombay. Will they help by sacrificing their interests? If they but think, they will see that no sacrifice is involved, as they had no right to the profits they have been making from foreign goods. In fact, the country has suffered heavily through this trade. Nothing has harmed the country as much as trade in foreign cloth. If, therefore, the merchants who carry on this trade understand the truth, they will expiate their sin and purify themselves. Will they overcome their greed?

And why should they not? Japan's awakening came after her wealthy people had sacrificed their wealth and the power that wealth brings. The strength to fight comes from self-sacrifice. A people who can fight has learnt to fight only by sacrificing their wealth and property. Physical strength and soul-force both presuppose sacrifice of wealth.

In this movement, however, no such sacrifice is involved. When we undertake any work after mature consideration, it involves the

least sacrifice. If merchants voluntarily and consciously give up trade in foreign cloth, they can make an honest living by starting business in khadi. We need some people to take up business of such capital investment that it will ultimately yield an annual profit of 60 crore rupees. How many merchants and shop-assistants would be required for such a business?

One thing, of course, is essential. Merchants should be ever active and thoughtful. Those lazy merchants who merely follow others, gamble or carry on business left by their father and make what profit they can in the ordinary course of things—these merchants will earn nothing unless they shake off their lethargy. A lazy man can never be brave; he can never win swaraj. Swaraj and lethargy are born enemies of each other.

The women of Bombay, like its merchants, are awake. Where shall we find women as advanced as in Bombay? The swadeshi movement can make no progress without their support, which means that we cannot win swaraj without it. We should not ask their help merely that they may give us the benefit of their presence. They are not invited just to make speeches. The country today begs of them the favours of utmost simplicity and hard work. Women will have to have good understanding and patriotism. If they do not shake off their fascination for foreign cloth and they obstinately insist on having dreadfully coloured saris, satins and muslins, what can poor men do?

Nor can women be forced to take the vow of swadeshi. If that is the only way to make them swadeshi-minded, I would rather that they continued with foreign cloth. Swaraj lies in their awakening, in the sacrifices voluntarily made by them. If women give up foreign cloth, they must do so out of a sense of duty. Muslim women should understand the cause of the Khilafat, Hindu women should understand the importance of the cow and all women should understand their responsibility for the eradication of poverty, which is a duty they owe to their neighbours. If, thus, the women in the country realize that it is morally wrong to wear foreign cloth, regard it as their duty to wear khadi and to ply the spinning-wheel every day, swadeshi will spread with the speed of wind. Bombay women can do this.

This also applies to the men in Bombay. They should overcome their love of fine clothes and take up the spinning-wheel. This alone will advance the cause of swadeshi.

I am convinced that, if the country understands the idea of complete swadeshi, she will secure swaraj without having to resort to civil disobedience or non-violent revolt. It is possible, however,

that such good fortune may not be ours and thousands of Indians may have to go to jail or die. If one province alone adopts complete swadeshi, that may not have so powerful an effect as to usher in swaraj. Should, however, one province or district be fully prepared, why may it not have the freedom to revolt? Is it unlikely, besides, that the strength of that one province or district will win freedom for the whole country? I am emphatically of the view that this is possible. Can we expect Bombay to be ready to take the lead in this manner?

Bombay alone can answer this question. Those who do not adopt complete swadeshi have no right to revolt, for they will not be able to control their anger and, at the critical moment, they will not find it possible to remain peaceful. We would then lose the battle we are about to win. We must not make this mistake.

That Bombay has learnt the lesson of peace and has become responsible, that it has determination and the Hindus, Muslims and Parsis living in it have become of one mind and heart—all this will be shown by people taking up carding, spinning and weaving, by khadi, in short. The citizens of Bombay will be fit to rise in peaceful revolt if men, women and children in their thousands take to carding, spinning and weaving and to wearing khadi.

This does not mean that every man and woman must spin or wear khadi. It is likely that Englishmen or the advocates of co-operation will not wear it. It is also possible that Government servants may not muster the necessary courage. We may, therefore, take it that a stray shop selling foreign cloth will continue to do business on account of these customers. But the scene in bazaars, mosques, temples, at gatherings and marriage-parties will certainly have changed. At all these places and on such occasions we shall see nothing but khadi. Things on the stage and in theatres will also wear a different look. If people dislike foreign cloth, will they go to see plays in which such cloth is used? It seems impossible to me that the use of khadi can spread unless people's fascination for foreign cloth disappears. I would certainly expect the exclusive use of khadi in all places frequented by ordinary, free citizens.

Bombay can bring this about by the end of this month. When it has, it may start a peaceful revolt by itself.

I hope no one will ask what connection khadi has with peaceful revolt. I have explained above that the spinning-wheel is a symbol of our peacefulness. When, besides, people are being invited to take it up as such, those who have no faith in peace will not ply it at all or do so with zeal. Since we invest the spinning-

wheel with the qualities of courage, honesty, simplicity and peacefulness, it will become the means of promoting more and more virtues.

The revolt for winning swaraj and saving the Khilafat cannot succeed with only a few people. It requires thousands. If we wish to generate through Bombay alone the necessary strength to win swaraj, we need a hundred thousand fighters. This may include both men and women, of any age over 16 years. No institution or organization can provide food for all these fighters. If the Congress starts doing this, we are bound to lose the battle. If we calculate the daily expense at the rate of eight annas each, even then it comes to 50,000 rupees. If we take that the battle will last for a month, the expense for feeding this number will by itself come to one and a half million.. If it becomes necessary to provide for their families, it is simply impossible to estimate the expenditure. In any case, the figure I have mentioned will have at least to be doubled.

We are not prepared for an expenditure of this order and, even assuming that such an amount is not too much for Bombay, we shall gain nothing from it; on the contrary, we shall lose the struggle. One cannot be sure of the type of people who will join. Those who volunteer to bear the burden of the country's struggle should be first-rate men in respect of character, honesty and courage. The test for judging even this is the spinning-wheel and other work connected with the processing of cotton. Till the fighters realize that they can earn their livelihood by carding or weaving, it will be impossible for us to recruit hundreds of thousands of them.

We are now in a position to consider what Bombay should do in order to lead the way.

1. Every intending fighter should learn the processes of carding, spinning and weaving before the end of this month. He must spin for not less than an hour daily.

2. The people of Bombay should start wearing principally hand-spun khadi before this month is out.

3. Before the end of this month the scene in the markets, temples, mosques and theatres of Bombay must undergo a transformation so that nothing but khadi will be seen in any of these places.

4. The city's men and women should spend their spare time in carding, spinning or weaving.

5. If the citizens of Bombay have still a lingering faith in the efficacy of violence, they should give it up.

6. If there is still anything wanting in Hindu-Muslim unity, any coldness, the deficiencies should be overcome.

If all this can be done by the end of this month, then in November Bombay can launch upon civil disobedience of laws on a mass scale.

The Prince of Wales will land in Bombay on November 17th. Can Bombay display its strength before that date? Bombay should rise in revolt only after, and not before, it has fulfilled the simple conditions laid down above. Only that province which does so can start civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-10-1921

128. MY NOTES

Losing Interest

When I am told that people have lost interest, that they should be given something new, I get worried. I then conclude that people have not realized the meaning of swaraj, of a war of dharma.

The means to swaraj can be constantly changing only if swaraj itself means something new every day. I for one cannot think of any means other than swadeshi. If, therefore, we have lost interest in swadeshi, we shall eventually lose it in swaraj as well.

A man who is too weak to breathe cannot have long to live. A healthy man does not even realize that he is breathing, or that his pulse is beating or that his eye is doing its work. Such a man never feels strain in carrying out essential functions. A poet never feels fatigued for using his powers. If anyone does, he is no poet. One who can so play on a *sarangi* that it seems to play of itself will never tire of the instrument. Similarly, if we have been permeated through and through by the spirit of swadeshi, we cannot lose interest in it. On the contrary, we shall realize that the distance we have travelled towards swadeshi is the distance we have travelled towards swaraj. And just as we can feel no fatigue on the road to swaraj, so can we feel none on the road to swadeshi. As we near the goal of swadeshi, we should feel invigorated much as a man who gets nearer to pure and refreshing air does. Our strength increases with every step in our journey of swadeshi. Where are they now who a year ago used to laugh at the spin-

ning-wheel? Shri Prafulla Chandra Ray[1], one of our foremost scientists, a peer of Shri Bose[2], an expert on delicate instruments and one who is associated with a number of business houses, has had to confess that for the four and a half crores of men and women of Bengal the only hope is the spinning-wheel. Those who tire of an activity of this nature simply do not understand it.

Moreover, what can a tired soldier accomplish? The soldier who is always changing his strategy is bound to lose. We, on the other hand, have all the time been going forward. We have been able to make a few inroads into the citadels of the legislature, of the title-holders, of the lawyers and of the students, and could manage with what little we won. But foreign cloth stands in our path obstructing all progress. Till that fortress has fallen, we should not expect swaraj. Swaraj is possible only after its complete destruction. Hence, without demolishing this bastion of foreign cloth, whether it takes one month or many, we cannot hope to advance. We have been able to pass the other forts by digging our way through them.

Swaraj is something that has to be experienced. Only the patient can say finally whether he has been cured. Because a patient's complexion has regained colour and he has put on weight, the doctor will say that he is well even if he cannot sit up. The patient, however, will not agree that he is well. In much the same way, every person will have to be a witness to himself and say whether swaraj has been won. If, therefore, it is established that the people are tired of spinning, carding or weaving, of khadi, I shall conclude that they do not want swaraj. A man who has been fasting or, leaving rice, consuming bran is out, we would say, to commit suicide. Similarly, it can be said of anyone who chooses to keep away from swadeshi that he does not desire swaraj.

Can it be said that the workers and the members of their families have adopted swadeshi so completely that they like to hear no more of it? Till a non-co-operator has adopted complete swadeshi for himself and his family, it is much too early for him to lose interest or get disheartened. I am certain that the whole country will go swadeshi once all non-co-operators have become genuine followers of swadeshi as a matter of duty. Our loss of interest today is like a child's. When it finds sums difficult, it wants to do something else. The teacher who indulges the child when it loses interest in this way or feels defeated acts as its enemy. The

[1] 1861-1944; scientist and patriot
[2] Sir J. C. Bose, F.R.S., botanist

child must be made to finish the sum on which he is working. In the same way, we must, we cannot but, complete the swadeshi *yajna* which we have undertaken. Our loss of interest comes from our inadequacy and ignorance. We do not know the price that swaraj demands or, if we do, we are not ready to pay it. Our love of Khilafat goes no further than attending meetings and contributing money. If this is how things stand, we shall never get swaraj. Before we can get it, we shall have to be hard workers and give up our love of meetings, processions and speeches. If we think that there is still need for such playthings, we must admit that swaraj is far off.

VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE

A friend put to me the following questions:

QUESTION : Shall we need some laws under swaraj?

ANSWER: Yes, we shall.

If so, surely people will have to respect them?

Of course, but they will do so willingly. The laws will have been enacted with their consent and will, therefore, be readily respected. Does this surprise you in any way?

To be sure, yes. I must admit I have my doubts about this.

I asked him why he said this.

From experience.

That startled me. I asked: Kindly tell me what you mean. I feel disturbed.

Let us see. Twenty thousand persons passed the resolution for non-co-operation at Nagpur. Naturally it was binding on those at any rate who passed it. Can we claim, however, that all those 20,000 have implemented it? Have all the lawyers who attended the session given up practice? Have all the students present there left schools and colleges? Have all carried out the pledge of swadeshi? Have they all taken up the spinning-wheel? But we may leave all this. Have the resolutions of the Congress Working Committee been implemented everywhere? And what could be said of the Congress could also be said of less important bodies. In how many of our institutions do members abide by the rules they themselves have framed? I have some experience of public life. I observe that people rarely respect their own rules. Can we enjoy swaraj till we have corrected this failing? Don't you feel that swaraj lies in our readiness to respect the rules we prescribe for ourselves in our present plight? If we lack this today, we are not likely to get it after we have won swaraj. In other words, swaraj is impossible if we cannot respect our own

rules. Moreover, nothing could be easier than obeying laws we have ourselves laid down. In this, we do not have to go and ask others to do anything. The matter concerns only those of us who raised our hands [in support of the resolutions], and I refer only to those Congressmen who are non-co-operators. When I think about them, my heart sinks, I feel doubtful whether we shall get swaraj this year.

In reply I said: There is some truth in what you say. Not all of us obey the rules we lay down. You will admit, though, that we are not today as negligent in this matter as we were twelve months ago. We can say that people have by and large respected the Nagpur Resolution. Where they have not respected it, they admit their weakness and are trying to overcome it.

With this reply, I partially succeeded in satisfying the questioner but I was myself not satisfied. The doubts seemed to be serious enough. I was set athinking. I told him at the moment that I would write about the matter in *Navajivan*, but I find that as I write this I feel more troubled by his doubts. While my defence of the people seems justified, I can see that we shall need greater readiness on our part to implement our own resolutions. We cannot rest content with the logic of "on a heath a castor-oil plant is king". We are being tested by the touchstone of swaraj, and do not prove pure gold. There is in our gold more than the usual admixture of other metals. Only the expert can discover how much of gold there is in what he tests. So far as we are concerned, we should reveal in the test the highest degree of purity necessary for winning swaraj. Till we do so, how can we have the needed strength? The questioner's argument is also valid, namely, that we members of the Congress should be able to prove ourselves, without any special effort on our part, gold of one hundred per cent purity. It is evident that all of us do not obey the resolutions of the Working Committee and our respective provincial committees with machine-like regularity.

There is a reason for this negligence. All this time, we have been raising our hands in support of resolutions without proper consideration, out of fear or a sense of shame or through hope of some gain. This does not become a lover of freedom. Even if he is in a minority of one, he would vote against a resolution with which he does not agree, and in a democratic organization he would be congratulated on his boldness and respected. We may, thus, oppose any resolution which we disapprove, discuss every resolution threadbare and adopt it only if we are convinced finally that there is good in it. But having once adopted a resolution, we should

carry it out whole-heartedly. Assuming that one such man in a thousand would enable us to win swaraj, we need 300,000 men who would fully implement the resolutions of the Congress and try to get others to do the same. There has been an increase in the number of such men, but I know for certain that their number does not come to 300,000.

Moreover, we have in the past always looked to the Government. Our resolutions were addressed to it and we had, therefore, little else to do besides passing resolutions. During the past 12 months we have been stressing one thing exclusively, and that is that we ourselves should act.

It is not too late yet. If we work hard and fully implement all the resolutions which have been passed, I think we shall advance very far.

Many things remain neglected owing to lack of planning, inefficiency and disinclination to work hard. It is our duty to shed lethargy, to improve our efficiency and to learn to think out everything carefully. A swarajist cannot afford to be wanting in these respects.

Wearing Khadi at the Time of Marriage

The distinction of being the first to be dressed exclusively in khadi at the time of their marriage goes to a Parsi couple. Last Sunday, Mr. Lavangia, President of the Khandwa Congress Committee, was married to Miss Dinbai Patel. The couple were dressed exclusively in khadi. The priests had also khadi robes on them and the guests, too, were requested to come dressed in khadi, so that at the function one saw for the most part khadi on every side. In other matters, too, a simplicity about the ceremony was maintained. The bridegroom's father had offered Rs. 500 to the Swaraj Fund. Let us hope this regard for swadeshi and simplicity will be widely emulated. I am sure every reader will join me in wishing this couple a long life of service to the nation.

Colour Bar

Shri Manilal Barrister has to his credit many services to the people of Fiji. On being deported by the Fiji Government, he went to live in New Zealand. He tried to set up practice there and applied the court for enrolment. The white Law Society of New Zealand made inquiries in Fiji. The Government of Fiji expressed doubts about Shri Manilal's loyalty and, in consequence, his application was rejected. The conclusion is that Shri Manilal cannot work and earn a living in New Zealand. No offence has been proved against him in Fiji, and there was nothing against his

conduct in New Zealand either. Shri Manilal's disloyalty consisted in the colour of his skin, in his services to his fellow-men. If a brown-skinned person, who is also an Indian and serves his fellow-countrymen, is not disloyal in the eyes of the white men, who else would be? And yet there are many simple-minded and liberal Indians who argue that we shall, that we can, come into our own only through co-operation with the Government.

East Africa

Everywhere, I see only the bitter fruits of co-operation with the Government. The whites of East Africa do not like even Mr. Andrews' going there and are, therefore, preparing to oppose him. This means that they wish to do him some harm. Simultaneously, they are having discussions with the British authorities and trying if they can deprive us of our rights. So far the British authorities have not told them categorically that Indians shall not be deprived of a single right of theirs. If indeed Indians have to lose their rights, that would be daylight robbery. It is my earnest hope that the Indians there will not compromise their rights. The only way in which India can help them in the matter is by herself acquiring the strength to help. This strength consists in swaraj.

Fruit of Untouchability

Why have we thus become untouchables everywhere? The reason is clear to me. God's ways of punishing man for his sins are mysterious. The world treats us as we have been treating six crores of our brethren. This stigma we carry with us wherever we go. I have noticed that even the Negroes of Africa look down on us as slaves. We shall not become worthy of the world's regard till we feel genuine compassion for the untouchables. Since we deceive ourselves and become indolent in the name of religion, we fall all the more low. Our own plight seems to me more pitiable than that of the untouchables, because we have to receive kicks both from God and the world. The untouchables, on the other hand, suffer only our kicks. They will get none from God. Even in regard to their failings, arguments in their defence, the facts of their disabilities, will be advanced and will be accepted as valid. To cleanse ourselves of this filth of untouchability is to cleanse our hearts. Till that is done, nothing that we may do is likely to yield fruit. There is no hope for a man whose heart has hardened and, when it is in the name of religion that a person has become cruel, we can say that his heart has hardened indeed. It is diffi-

cult to convince a person who sacrifices animals in the name of religion that his action is cruel. It is easier to convince one who gets them killed for the sake of his palate. We shall, therefore, be able to rid Hinduism of this evil only if we give serious thought to the problem and dispel from our hearts the contempt we harbour. Unless this is done, not objecting to contact with an *Antyaja* will not by itself save one from sin. Free contact with *Antyajas* will mean that we have expelled the poison which has come to permeate the otherwise wholesome system of caste-restrictions; it means abandoning our notions of high and low and developing a sense of brotherhood in all our relations. Only when this is done can we say that we have ended the practice of untouchability. As things are today, the evil has become so pervasive that even among *Antyajas* there are established distinctions of high and low. By shunning contact with *Dheds*, *Bhangis* and others, we have bred in their hearts too the desire to claim superiority over some others. Disappearance of the idea of untouchability means being free from such a desire, and this precisely is the meaning of the line, "The notion of being defiled by touch is like a superfluous limb."

Congress workers should never show themselves indifferent in this matter. Whenever they see evidence of any distinction of high and low, they should set their face firmly against it. While we do not wish to destroy the customary restraints which people accept as religious, we do not want, either, to see ignorance accepted as religious restraint. The essence of such restraint lies in suffering oneself, not in making others suffer. Anyone who inflicts suffering on others is a man of self-indulgence, not of self-control. Forcing others to perform all kinds of actions in order that one may enjoy the pleasures of heaven is not the way to live a life of self-control. For eradicating the practice of untouchability and shedding the cruelty that lies behind it, it is very important that we always do something for the service of the untouchables, understand their difficulties, look after their orphans, go to their dwellings and do some useful work for them, admit a few of their children to our schools, if we are running any, and explain to the other children in our charge the necessity of doing this, visit their neighbourhood in every village and secure for them the facilities which they lack. The habit of thus looking on them with love and understanding will have such an effect on us that we ourselves shall be purified in the process and our hardness will melt away. Swaraj in fact means the development in us of a desire to share the sufferings of all.

Convenience of Public

There will be so many changes at the forthcoming session of the Congress that, if the people do not understand them, they may go away dissatisfied and even disorganization may follow. The success of the session depends no less on the people than on the office-bearers and the volunteers. If the people appreciate the value of organization and respect the regulations, the arrangements will succeed completely, otherwise we may certainly expect trouble. Many are not happy about the restriction on the number of spectators announced already, but a little reflection will convince them of its necessity. The Congress is the executive organ of the nation. When thousands congregate to watch it at its work, making arrangements for those thousands comes to be the biggest practical problem. When, therefore, the Congress is engaged in implementing decisions and formulating policies, it is not a spectacle for thousands to watch.

One solution is not to admit spectators at all, but this cannot be done immediately. Some at least have to be allowed. The Reception Committee, therefore, has decided to make arrangements for a maximum of three thousand spectators. Who these three thousand should be has still to be decided. Paid admissions have been stopped, and the Committee has reserved to itself the right to admit a few prominent individuals. Having thus restricted the number, the Committee has decided to meet every possible need. People should accept these restrictions in good spirit.

Everyone, however, will be able to see and attend every part of the proceedings worth attending. A payment of four annas will entitle a person to remain on the campus the whole day. He will be able to attend all the functions, music programmes, speeches, etc., at the session. Only, he will not be allowed inside the enclosure when the Congress is in session. He will also be able to hear every speaker. Thus a payment of four annas will enable all to satisfy their curiosity. I expect not less than 100,000 spectators for the session, and they will find satisfactory arrangements made for everything which may be of instructive value to them.

Parsi Volunteers

Mr. Shapoorji Behramji Gotla writes from Navsari:[1]

I hope others will take up this suggestion and, if it is not possi-

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. It appealed to Parsis to raise a volunteer corps of their own for the forthcoming session of the Congress in December and the writer offered his services to become one of its members.

ble to form a separate unit, they will at any rate join one of the units already formed.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-10-1921

129. LETTER TO A. G. KANITKAR

SABARMATI,
October 17 [1921]

DEAR FRIEND,

I was pleased to receive your letter.

I do not believe in the present scouts organization. Nor could I possibly advise anyone to associate himself with any welcome to the Prince who is being brought here to support a hideous wrong. I quite agree with you that our fall is due to our departure from our ideals of simplicity and love. Not till we have reverted to swadeshi and removed untouchability is any peace possible for India.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

A well-behaved English boy should be as dear as a brother.

From the original : C W. 5799. Courtesy : D. P. Joshi

130. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SABARMATI,
Monday [October 17, 1921][1]

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I saw your letter only today. If I find a good *Dhed* or *Bhangi* boy, I shall send him to you. It is difficult to get such boys. I didn't know at all that you take vegetarian diet.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the original : C.W. 4360. Courtesy : Tehmina Khambhatta

[1] From the postmark

131. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

[Before *October 19, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. There is no need for you to take a job, nor is it necessary to go to the office of the Association when you have no work there. I also saw your letter to Shri Petit. I was pained to read it. I see that it is full of anger. When you had left the matter to me, you need not have written to him.

This will also make my work a little difficult; but you need not worry. My hint is for the future.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI
HIRABAG
GIRGAUM
BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2579

132. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[2]

[*October 19, 1921*]

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARYA
SALEM

HOW CAN NEHRUJI[3] DISREGARD WORKING COMMITTEE[4] RESOLUTION? SORRY YOU ARE ANGRY. HOW CAN YOU THREATEN SCHISM? MEETING MUST BE HELD. YOU SHOULD DO AS CONSCIENCE DICTATES.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7640

[1] From the postmark of arrival in Bombay on October 19, 1921

[2] In reply to his telegram dated October 19 which read : "Nehruji threatens fight by counteracting. He would fight shadow. I shall start schism or faction. Pray wire him insisting on your inborn gospel of love or our noble cause would suffer needless civil ridicule. Will fix any date or place you wish. Only Hyderabad or Karachi soon after trial appeals morally politically best. I will attend sharing risks."

[3] Pandit Motilal Nehru, General Secretary of the Congress

[4] Which convened the All-India Congress Committee meeting on November 4

133. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
October 19, 1921

I AGREE WITH YOU THAT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT DISREGARD THE WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD MEET IN DELHI AS RESOLVED.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1921

134. LETTER TO G. V. SUBBA RAO

SABARMATI,
October 19, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

Agriculture is no doubt better than weaving as an occupation, but it requires a greater outlay of capital expenditure and an amount of patience, perseverance and outdoor labour, which is not likely to be suited to a Government servant fresh from his desk-work, whose means, again, generally speaking may be so limited as to make it impossible to begin farming even on a modest scale.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3622

135. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

ASHRAM,
Wednesday [On or after *October 19, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I cannot but retain the cheque you have sent me. You will have to draw upon me when you require it. It seems as if Motilalji will never be free from the illnesses [in the family].

[1] Kishorelal Mashruwala, mentioned in the last para of the letter, retired to a hut on Friday, October 14, 1921.

Is it not a shortcoming of my *tapascharya* that I cannot convince people in the matter of swadeshi? A perfect *tapasvi*, though silent, does influence through his sincere feelings. Some do so by a mere hint, some by word of mouth and some by writing. What is the meaning of all this? Those who wear khaddar only in my presence do so out of love for me and not owing to my *tapascharya*. Surely, a free India of the future is not going to import its foodgrains from abroad. Nor will it import cloth. Are we going to import bottles of water and medicines from England? Our dharma will change when our country ceases to grow cotton. We shall then have to leave the land.

I hope you are aware that Kishorelal has retired to a hut set up in a solitary place.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 10601

136. NOTES

The Charkha in the "Gita"

In the last issue I have endeavoured to answer the objections raised by the Poet against spinning as a sacrament to be performed by all. I have done so in all humility and with the desire to convince the Poet and those who think like him. The reader will be interested in knowing that my belief is derived largely from the *Bhagavad Gita*. I have quoted the relevant verses in the article itself. I give below Edwin Arnold's rendering of the verses from his *Song Celestial* for the benefit of those who do not read Sanskrit.

Work is more excellent than idleness;
    The body's life proceeds not, lacking work.
There is a task of holiness to do,
    Unlike world-binding toil, which bindeth not
The faithful soul; such earthly duty do
    Free from desire, and thou shalt well perform
Thy heavenly purpose. Spake Prajapati
    In the beginning, when all men were made,
And, with mankind, the sacrifice—"Do this!
    Work! Sacrifice! Increase and multiply
With sacrifice! This shall be *Kamadhuk*,
    Your 'Cow of Plenty', giving back her milk
Of all abundance. Worship the gods thereby;
    The gods shall yield ye grace. Those meats ye crave

The gods will grant to Labour, when it pays
Tithes in the altar-flame. But if one eats
Fruits of the earth, rendering to kindly heaven,
No gift of toil, that thief steals from his world."
Who eat of food after their sacrifice
Are quit of fault, but they that spread a feast
All for themselves, eat sin and drink of sin.
By food the living live; food comes of rain.
And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil;
Thus action is of Brahma, who is one,
The Only, All-pervading; at all times
Present in sacrifice. He that abstains
To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
Shameful and vain.

Work here undoubtedly refers to physical labour, and work by way of sacrifice can only be work to be done by all for the common benefit. Such work, such sacrifice can only be spinning. I do not wish to suggest that the author of the Divine Song had the spinning-wheel in mind. He merely laid down a fundamental principle of conduct. And reading in and applying it to India I can only think of spinning as the fittest and most acceptable sacrificial body labour. I cannot imagine anything nobler or more national than that for say one hour in the day we should all do the labour that the poor must do and thus identify ourselves with them and through them with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than that in His name I should labour for the poor even as they do. The spinning-wheel spells a more equitable distribution of the riches of the earth.

Bengal's Response

For the satisfaction of those who have not studied the Poet's article, let me inform them that the Poet is not altogether against the spinning-wheel. He does not see the necessity of spinning for all. But I am convinced, that as we go forward there will be no one doubting the efficacy and supremacy of the charkha for banishing India's distressful and growing poverty. Dr. P. C. Ray's frank recognition of the charkha is a valuable acquisition. More than all this recognition is the news coming through letters, that wherever Deshabandhu Das and his devoted wife go, crowds give up their foreign clothing and take up the charkha. Here is the

translation of an extract from a letter received by a Bengali friend from his father living near Chandpur made known to India by the Gurkha charge on that dreadful night when helpless coolies were driven away from the station-yard.

> Yesterday there was mass singing in procession, an exhibition of hand-spun yarn and a huge mass meeting at the Nirode Park. . . . There was a huge bonfire in which such a large mass of topis and cloth was burnt as I cannot describe. The Shah merchant of Pal's market brought over to the meeting his whole stock of foreign cloth and threw it into the fire. The charkha has not yet spread so much, but I am expecting better results now. In my family your mother, sister and three brothers are all spinning very good yarn. . . . .

This is merely a sample of what is happening all over Bengal. I doubt not, that when Bengal's imagination is touched, she will find herself in the front.

The Honours List

The Honours List is daily increasing. If we are renouncing one kind of titles from the Government, we are asking for another and true variety. Gangadharrao Deshpande is the latest selection. His name and the names of many I can think of convince me of the approaching victory. Only we must remain steady under the volley. If we continue to respond to the Government warrants without fuss, without noise and without anger, we may feel certain of immediate success. I continue to receive letters from friends inquiring what will happen when all the leaders are taken away. The questioners betray their unbelief in, if not their unfitness for, swaraj by putting the question, "What will happen when all the leaders die?" Our fitness for swaraj can only be demonstrated by our capacity to continue our work in spite of the withdrawal of leaders by death or imprisonment. Surely the memory of imprisonment should act as a spur to greater and more disciplined action. Another friend who felt disappointed when I was not arrested as was rumoured I would be on the fifth, showed a robust faith in himself and the cause. We must be able to stand on our own legs without support even as we breathe naturally and without artificial aid. If Karnatak is the country I have imagined it to be, Gangadharrao Deshpande's arrest and imprisonment must mean complete boycott of foreign cloth and much greater production of khadi. Karnatak cannot rest satisfied till by its own effort it has secured the freedom of the imprisoned and still-to-be-imprisoned patriots.

Other Leaders

There is little doubt that the Government of Bombay are going about their business in a methodical manner in picking out leaders. For in Pir Turab Ali Shah and Pir Mujadid they have arrested two Mussulmans who have a very large following and whose influence was exercised in order to curb the violent tendency among the rank and file. Of course, Mr. Deshpande's unrivalled influence in Karnatak was also for peace. One would almost think the Government of Bombay was ashamed of its own moderation and was trying to make up for past neglect. The Dharwar judgment and the Sind and the Karnatak arrests point to the fact that the Bombay Government is almost inviting people to violence. But let us hope that it has become awakened too late for the purpose. The country seems to have understood which way lies its interest and will not play into the hands of the Government. Given Hindu-Muslim unity, intelligent acceptance of non-violence by the masses, and systematic work in swadeshi, and nothing can possibly keep us from attaining swaraj during this year.

A Magistrate's Apology

The reader will recollect the assault instigated by the District Magistrate of Bulandshahr upon Mr. Tyagi who was being tried in his court and who was therefore under his protection.[1] I have now before me the apology he tendered to the accused. Here it is.

> PRISONER AT THE BAR,
>
> Before today's proceedings go any further, I wish to say something.
>
> I do so for two reasons, —the first, that I am trying you, and it is not right that you or anyone else should suspect that you will not be tried fairly and in a proper manner. The second, that no officer of Government can wish that any incident should happen to give any section of the community reasonable grounds for resentment, especially as unscrupulous persons are ready to exaggerate such incidents.
>
> At the first hearing I was impatient and you were insolent. I did wrong in having you slapped; and I regret that I did so.
>
> I now tell you, that if you are respectful to the Court, you will find me courteous. If you do not behave properly, I shall find proper means of dealing with you. You will in any case be tried fairly and

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast".

patiently; and you will have a full opportunity at the proper stage to make any relevant remarks you have to offer.

I may add that out of regard to the loyal members of your community who are doing good work in this District, if you are proved innocent of the offence of which you are accused in this or in any other court, I shall send 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund.

W. E. J. Dobbs

It is evident to me that the apology was offered under pressure, even as Sir Michael O'Dwyer was made to apologize to the late Council for his offensive remarks. Insincere and mechanical as the wording is, at that very sitting the magistrate broke his promise of giving the accused a patient hearing by expunging from his statement a passage which he did not like. His offer to pay Rs. 50/- to the Malabar Relief Fund for the sake of the loyalists if he was proved to be innocent shows the incorrigibility of the magistrate. The donation was meant to purge the offence committed by the magistrate. The "loyalists" could have nothing to do with the innocence or guilt of the accused. Why then should the donation be conditional upon proof of the accused's innocence? This assault by the magistrate raises an issue of the gravest import. Could such a man occupy the position of a magistrate for a single day under any civilized Government? Could for instance the Lord Chief Justice of England assault a prisoner being tried before him and still retain his high office? If the Government of India was not in reality a lawless and totally irresponsible government, the magistrate would have been suspended and prosecuted as a common felon. An assault by a judge upon an accused whilst he is on his trial before that judge is not an ordinary assault that could be treated lightly.

There should be limit even to co-operating patience. Do the Indian ministers concerned feel an easy conscience over the magistrate's crime against the nation? Or do they think that they have no responsibility because the magistrate does not belong to their department?

A non-co-operator's duty is simple. Each such violation of law and morals on the part of Government officials must result in making us more determined in our purpose. We may not be satisfied till the system under which such atrocious conduct is possible is uprooted.

Accused's Statement

Two days before the second hearing of the case Mr. Tyagi sent to the magistrate the following statement:

Vandemataram

In the Court of the District Magistrate, Bulandshahr.

From Mahavir Tyagi accused under Sections 124 and 153 I.P. Code.

I, Mahavir Tyagi, an innocent accused, am compelled to file the following statement: I want to say through this writing that as the said Magistrate, while proving his tyranny and incompetency on the 3rd instant, treated me in the open Court in a way which was calculated to insult and wound myself, my creed and my nationality, by forcing me to stand with "attention", threatening to have me kicked by the Police and actually getting me slapped, an action on the part of the Magistrate which was absolutely illegal and barbarous, therefore in order to preserve my national, religious and personal honour and self-respect, I have, as a protest, decided to take a vow of silence and make a "speech strike" in this Court which has set every law at naught.

(Note:—The following words here in the statement were, against the wishes of the accused, expunged by the Court and signed and dated: "*Jaisi ki Punjab main meri Bahnaun ki behurmati ki gai aur voh behurmati insaf ke liye Darbar-i-illahi main pesh hai*", i.e., just as my sisters in the Punjab were insulted and their outraged honour is seeking its justice before God, in the same way) I leave to God my own insult which is far less than the outrage on the honour of my said sisters. It is possible that the extraordinary treatment meted out to me was intended to provoke the general public, but, I, from my own experience, would say that now Indian public is sufficiently educated. They can put up with every tyranny but would not go a step behind in the non-violent course chalked out for them by the Mahatma (Gandhi).

'raying to God for the liberation of my country,

I am,
The Silent,
MAHAVIR TYAGI

BULANDSHAHR JAIL,
October 4, 1921

It is a courageous and outspoken statement, and if it represents Mr. Tyagi's own sentiments, it requires a modification of the view questioning his courage at the time he was assaulted. As the case is of very considerable importance, involving as it does the question of the bodily safety of prisoners, it is necessary to examine somewhat fully the issues arising from it.

In my opinion the "speech strike" and adopting the title of "the silent," do not help at all. It was the clear duty of the prisoner on the day he was struck to refuse voluntarily to remain in the

court. He should have refused there and then to submit to further trial by the so-called judge. He should certainly have sat down as a mark of disowning the court's jurisdiction. All this would have probably meant more assault, certainly more punishment. But the secret of non-violence treated as a weapon of the strong means the inviting of suffering and personal injury in order to avoid tyranny. Ordinarily the movement requires or permits us to attend courts under warrants, because it did not anticipate conduct such as the Bulandshahr magistrate's. But the extraordinary conduct of the magistrate requires an extraordinary remedy.

The statement rightly emphasizes non-violence. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. The pledge of non-violence does not require us to co-operate in our humiliation. It therefore does not require us to crawl on our bellies or to draw lines with our noses or to walk to salute the Union Jack or to do anything degrading at the dictation of officials. On the contrary our creed requires us to refuse to do any of these things even though we should be shot. It was therefore, for instance, no part of the duty of the Jallianwala Bagh people to run away or even to turn their backs when they were fired upon. If the message of non-violence had reached them, they would have been expected when fire was opened on them to march towards it with bare breasts and die rejoicing in the belief that it meant the freedom of their country. Non-violence laughs at the might of the tyrant and stultifies him by non-retaliation and non-retiral. We played into General Dyer's hands because we acted as he had expected. He wanted us to run away from his fire, he wanted us to crawl on our bellies and to draw lines with our noses. That was part of the game of "frightfulness". When we face it with eyes front, it vanishes like an apparition. We may not all evolve that type of courage. But I am certain that swaraj is unattainable this year if some of us have not the courage which enables us to stand firm like a rock without retaliating. The might of the tyrant recoils upon himself when it meets with no response, even as an arm violently waved in the air suffers dislocation.

A Relevant Question

And just as we need the cool courage described above, we need perfect discipline and training in voluntary obedience to be able to offer civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is the active expression of non-violence. Civil disobedience distinguishes the non-violence of the strong from the passive, i.e., negative non-violence of the weak. And as weakness cannot lead to swaraj, negative non-violence must fail to achieve our purpose.

Have we then the requisite discipline? Have we, a friend asked me, evolved the spirit of obedience to our own rules and resolutions? Whilst we have made tremendous headway during the past twelve months, we have certainly not made enough to warrant us in embarking upon civil disobedience with easy confidence. Rules voluntarily passed by us and rules which carry no sanction save the disapproval of our own conscience must be like debts of honour held far more binding than rules superimposed upon us or rules whose breach we can purge by paying the penalty thereof. It follows that if we have not learnt the discipline of obeying our own rules, in other words carrying out our own promises, we are ill-adapted for disobedience that can be at all described as civil. I do therefore suggest to every Congressman, every non-co-operator, and above all to every member of the All-India Congress Committee to set himself or herself right with the Congress and his or her creed by carrying on the strictest self-examination and by correcting himself or herself wherever he or she might have failed.

The Next Meeting

The forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee will nearly decide our fate so far as the attainment of our three ends during this year is concerned. We must have a programme which, if we vote for it, we must carry out at the cost of our lives. I am hoping that everyone will come with the fullest information about his own constituency on every point. I hope that everyone will come with a clean slate so far as his own obligations under the programme are concerned. Let every member realize, that he or she is a representative of the people and especially his electors in a manner in which the stalwarts in the reformed councils cannot claim to be. Let him think out the meaning of his responsibility, if he as a representative is to play his part in attaining the national goal during the next two months.

More Signatures

Telegrams and letters have poured in upon me from Deshbandhu Das downwards authorizing me to insert their signatures to the Manifesto[1] on the Karachi Resolution. I am not announcing all the names, because I hold it to be unnecessary. It was a demonstration to show the Government that the Mussulman divines were not the only ones who held it sinful to serve the pre-

[1] *Vide* "A Manifesto", 4-10-1921.

sent Government, and the Ali Brothers and their co-accused were not the only persons to approve of the Karachi Resolution. The others will sign the Manifesto, if the Government will graciously honour the signatories with arrest and imprisonment.

CONGRESS FINANCE

I have seen criticism in the Press regarding the collection and the administration of the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. The public have certainly the right to know all about the Fund and other Congress collections. In my opinion the Congress finance has never been in a more satisfactory condition. It will be possible to speak with greater definiteness, when Mr. Sopariwala who has been appointed all-India auditor has inspected all the Congress branches and reported upon their condition. The announcement made on the 1st of July as to the collections stands.[1] There was a mistake made by me in reading Mr. Das' wire. My reading was, that fifteen lakhs were collected and ten more were as good as collected. I learnt on meeting him, that fifteen lakhs were definitely promised, and he expected to bring up the figure to twenty-five lakhs. When I was last in Calcutta, Mr. Das had not succeeded in collecting fifteen lakhs that were definitely promised, but he certainly expected to collect that and the additional ten lakhs. In any case the crore was assured without the ten lakhs. The figures for all the other provinces were an understatement. Most of the monies have certainly been collected. Some debts are still outstanding. Every province knows its finance. The accounts are kept by each province and they are open to the inspection of every member. In some provinces, I know, the accounts are published periodically and are also audited by local auditors. Most branches have prepared their budgets and are spending according to the budgets sanctioned. It is possible that some provinces have spent more extravagantly than others, it is equally possible that in every province extravagance in some department or other may be proved by an outsider. But I do know that in the majority of cases monies have been and are being spent with the knowledge and sanction of the members of provincial bodies. In every province, in so far as I am aware, the chairmen are men of highest probity. In Messrs Jamnalal Bajaj and Umar Sobani the All-India Congress Committe has treasurers who command universal respect, and in Messrs Nehru and Ansari and Rajagopalachari it has secretaries whom it will be difficult to surpass in ability, industry or

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX.

integrity. I have therefore no hesitation in assuring the busy reader who is solicitous about the Congress finance that all that is humanly possible has been done by the Congress authorities to ensure proper collection and administration of all new Congress funds.

FOREIGN POLICY

The draft resolution on foreign policy approved and circulated by the Working Committee has created a mild sensation. That some people are surprised at the Working Committee seriously discussing the question shows that in their opinion India is not ripe for swaraj. I have endeavoured to show before now, that everybody and every nation is always ripe for swaraj, or to put it another way no nation needs to undergo tutelage at the hands of another. Indeed whilst we are maturing our plans for establishing swaraj, we are bound to consider and define our foreign policy. Surely we are bound authoritatively to tell the world what relations we wish to cultivate with it. If we do not fear our neighbours, or if although feeling strong we have no designs upon them, we must say so. We are equally bound to tell the world whether we want to send our sepoys to the battle-fields of France or Mesopotamia. We must not be afraid to speak our minds on all that concerns the nation.

A correspondent from Ludhiana has sent me a string of questions, showing how the public mind is agitated. He begins:

> 1. Shall India's foreign policy be governed by any other consideration but that of its population?

Naturally the interest of India must be given preference over all others.

> 2. Should Indian men or money be used for fighting the battles of England, etc.?

Yes, if India has entered into treaty obligations to fight for other nations.

> 3. Shall the law of the land be subordinate to the special interest of any sect, league or society?

Certainly not. But the law may be such as to provide assistance to friendly neighbours as we would, if we were free today, be assisting the Turks with men and money to the best of our ability.

> 4. Should any government be made a tool for the protection of any religion, race or class?

The swaraj government to be worth the name will certainly protect the religions professed in India and the races domiciled in India.

5. How are things to be settled when Shastra or *Shariat* says one thing and the country's need is against it?

The question is really irrelevant. The need of one sect or the religion professed by it must be the need of the country.

6. Should the relations between the zemindars and the ryots be based on mutiny?

I hope they never will be so based under swaraj, but that then they will be happy and mutually beneficial.

7. Should loyalty to one's motherland be conditional, and if so, how?

Loyalty to the country is always subordinate to loyalty to God.

Young India, 20-10-1921

137. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY A CAMOUFLAGE?

The editorial notes in the current number of *The Modern Review* contain reflections on Hindu-Muslim unity, which deserve a reply. The talented editor has headed them with the word "camouflage" and has evidently come to the conclusion that the unity is only so-called. In my opinion, however, it is not only not a camouflage but is fast becoming a permanent reality. I have made the admission in these pages that it is still a sapling requiring delicate handling. But it is certainly not a pretension or make-believe if only because both realize the truth of the common danger.

It is unfortunately still true, that the communal or the sectarian spirit is predominant. Mutual distrust is still there. Old memories are still alive. It is still true that at elections considerations not of fitness but of religion prevail. But to recognize these facts is to recognize the difficulty of union. When both parties know them and are honestly trying to achieve unity in spite of them, it is hardly just to call the attempt or the limited achievement a camouflage.

It is not correct to say that the appeal of the Khilafat associations against cow-killing leaves the Mussulmans cold and unresponsive. In the first place, is it not a cheering phenomenon that the Khilafat workers themselves are Mussulmans working to prevent

cow-killing? In the second place, I venture to assure the editor that the appeal has had wonderful success in almost all the parts of India. Is it a small matter that the burden of cow-protection has been taken over almost entirely by the Mussulman workers? Was it not a soul-stirring thing for Hindus to witness Messrs Chotani and Khatri of Bombay rescuing hundreds of cows from their co-religionists and presenting them to the grateful Hindus?

It is certainly true that both Maulana Mahomed Ali and I are careful enough "not to tread on each other's corns". But for frankness of treatment it would be difficult to bear us. For us the unity is not "a house of cards" as the writer cruelly suggests, but it is such a substantial fact that we would die to keep it intact. Let me inform the reader that throughout all our journeyings there has never been a jar between us, never any mental reservations. The cruellest cut however is given in the following sentence:

> Reading between the lines of their speeches, it is not difficult to see that with one of them the sad plight of the Khilafat in distant Turkey is the central fact, while with the other the attainment of swaraj here in India is the primary object in view.

I claim that with us both the Khilafat is the central fact, with Maulana Mahomed Ali because it is his religion, with me because in laying down my life for the Khilafat I ensure the safety of the cow, that is my religion, from the Mussulman knife. Both hold swaraj equally dear because only by swaraj is the safety of our respective faiths possible. This may seem a lower ideal. But there is no concealment in it. For me the attainment of the Khilafat through India's power is the attainment of swaraj. Love is the basis of our friendship as it is of religion. I seek to gain Mussulman friendship by right of love. And if love persists even on the part of one community, unity will become a settled fact in our national life. It is unjust to suggest of Maulana Mahomed Ali that he speaks in elegant Urdu ununderstandable of the majority of Bengali Mussulmans. I know that he has been trying his best to introduce into his Urdu speech as much simplicity as possible.

It is unfortunately true, that there are still Hindus and Mussulmans who out of fear of one another consider foreign domination a necessity. And that has not a little to do with the delay in the attainment of our goal. We do not yet clearly perceive that the possibility of a free fight between the two communities is a lesser evil than the existence of foreign domination. And if it is the interposition of the British Government which keeps us

from fighting one another, the sooner we are left free to fight, the bettter for our manhood, our respective religions and our country. It will not be a new phenomenon if we fought ourselves into sanity. The English carried on internecine warfare for twenty-one years before they settled down to peaceful work. The French fought among themselves with a savage ferocity hardly excelled during recent times. The Americans did nothing better before they evolved their commonwealth. Let us not hug our unmanliness for fear of fighting amongst ourselves. The able writer of the "notes" loves unity as much as any of us and suggests that there must be "a root and branch change, a radical transformation and reconstruction from the foundation". But he leaves the reader to guess the remedy. It would have been better if he had made concrete suggestions. He would evidently have us inter-marry and inter-dine if only by way of a beginning. If that is the radical transformation desired by him and if it is a condition precedent to the attainment of swaraj I very much fear that we would have to wait at least for a century. It is tantamount to asking Hindus to give up their religion. I do not say that it is wrong to do so, but I do suggest that it is reformation outside practical politics. And when that transformation comes, if it is ever to come, it will not be Hindu-Muslim unity. And what the present movement is aiming at is to achieve unity even whilst a devout Mussulman retains his faith intact and a devout Hindu his. I have therefore often said to my audiences, that the Ali Brothers and I serve as an object-lesson to all Hindus and Mussulmans in Hindu-Muslim unity. We both claim to be devoted to our respective faiths. In spite of the greatest regard for the Brothers I would not give my daughter in marriage to one of their sons, and I know that they would not give theirs to my son, assuming that in spite of his being a Hindu, he so far reformed himself as to covet the hand of their daughter. I do not partake of their meat foods, and they scrupulously respect my bigotry, if my self-denial may be so named. And yet I do not know three persons whose hearts are more united than those of the Ali Brothers and myself. And I wish to assure the reader, that the unity is not a camouflage but it is a lasting friendship based upon exquisitely delicate regard and toleration of one another's views and habits. And I have no manner of fear that when the protecting hand of the British is withdrawn from me, either the Brothers or their friends would violate my freedom or attack my religion. And I base this security from fear first upon God and His promise of safety to every creature of His who endeavours to walk in His fear, and then

upon the honourable conduct of the Brothers and their friends, although I am aware that physically any one of them is more than a match for twelve like me put together. And so from the particular instance I have generalized for the whole of India, and shown that Hindu-Muslim unity is possible if only we have mutual toleration, and faith in ourselves and therefore in the ultimate goodness of human nature.

Young India, 20-10-1921

138. THE MEANING OF THE MOPLAH RISING

A correspondent from Scotland takes me to task for not dealing sufficiently with the Moplah rising in these columns. The result, he says, has been that those in Great Britain who are in the habit of studying Indian affairs have been induced to believe that an Islamic kingdom is established in India. The reproof is not wholly undeserved, but I have not shirked duty in the matter. I have been simply helpless. I wanted to go to Calicut and reach the bottom of the trouble as I believed I could have. But the Government had willed it otherwise. I am sorry to believe but it is my belief, that the men on the spot do not want to end the trouble. They certainly do not wish to give non-co-operators the credit for peacefully ending the trouble. They are desirous of showing once more, that it is only the British soldier who can maintain peace in India. And I could not then give battle to the Government by disregarding the instructions not to enter the disturbed area.

I should like to think better of the men on the spot. It is contrary to my nature to believe in the depravity of human beings. But there is so much evidence about me of the depravity of the bureaucratic mind that it will stop at nothing to gain its end. It is the literal truth I tell, when I say that before I went to Champaran, I did not believe the stories I was told of atrocities committed against the peasantry of Champaran. When I went there, I found the state much worse than was described to me. I had refused to believe that innocent people could have been murdered in cold blood without warning as they were in Jallianwala Bagh. I had refused to believe that human beings could be made to crawl upon their bellies. But on reaching the Punjab, I found to my horror that much more than what I was told had happened. And all this was done in the name of peace and order so-called, but in reality for the purpose of sustaining a false

prestige, a false system and an unnatural commerce. It is true that a strong Lieutenant-Governor was able to attain justice in Champaran in the face of overwhelming opposition. But that was really an exception due to exceptional causes. And so I feel the Moplah revolt has come as a blessing to a system that is crumbling to pieces by the weight of its own enormity.

The Moplah revolt is a test for Hindus and Mussulmans. Can Hindu friendship survive the strain put upon it? Can Mussulmans in the deepest recesses of their hearts approve of the conduct of the Moplahs? Time alone can show the reality. A verbal and forced philosophic acceptance of the inevitable is no test of Hindu friendship. The Hindus must have the courage and the faith to feel that they can protect their religion in spite of such fanatical eruptions. A verbal disapproval by the Mussulmans of Moplah madness is no test of Mussulman friendship. The Mussulmans must naturally feel the shame and humiliation of the Moplah conduct about forcible conversions and looting, and they must work away so silently and effectively that such things might become impossible even on the part of the most fanatical among them. My belief is that the Hindus as a body have received the Moplah madness with equanimity and that the cultured Mussulmans are sincerely sorry for the Moplah's perversion of the teachings of the Prophet.

The Moplah revolt teaches another lesson, viz., that each individual must be taught the art of self-defence. It is more a mental state that has to [be] inculcated than that our bodies should be trained for retaliation. Our mental training has been one of feeling helpless. Bravery is not a quality of the body, it is of the soul. I have seen cowards encased in tough muscles, and rare courage in the frailest body. I have seen big bulky and muscular Zulus cowering before an English lad and turning tail if they saw a loaded revolver pointed at them. I have seen Emily Hobhouse with a paralytic body exhibiting courage of the highest order. She was the one noble woman who kept up the drooping spirits of brave Boer generals and equally brave Boer women. The weakest of us physically must be taught the art of facing dangers and giving a good account of ourselves. What was more detestable, the ignorant fanaticism of the Moplah brother, or the cowardliness of the Hindu brother who helplessly muttered the Islamic formula or allowed his tuft of hairs to be cut or his vest to be changed? Let me not be misunderstood. I want both the Hindus and Mussulmans to cultivate the cool courage to die without killing. But if one has not that courage, I want him to cultivate

the art of killing and being killed, rather than in a cowardly manner flee from danger. For the latter in spite of his flight does commit mental *himsa*. He flees because he has not the courage to be killed in the act of killing.

There is yet another lesson the Moplah outbreak teaches us. We dare not leave any section of our countrymen in utter darkness and expect not to be overtaken by it ourselves. Our English "masters" were uninterested in the Moplahs becoming orderly citizens and learning the virtue of toleration and the truth of Islam. But we too have neglected our ignorant countrymen all these long centuries. We have not felt the call of love to see that no one was left ignorant of the necessity of humaneness or remained in want of food or clothing for no fault of his own. If we do not wake up betimes, we shall find a similar tragedy enacted by all the submerged classes. The present awakening is affecting all classes. The "untouchables" and all the so-called semi-savage tribes will presently bear witness to our wrongs against them if we do not do penance and render tardy justice to them.

Young India, 20-10-1921

139. TO THE READER

I have said elsewhere in this issue that, as far as lies within my power, I shall spend the remaining part of this year in Gujarat, and that too in the Ashram.

My only reason for doing so is to have as much time as possible to myself for thinking and writing and for meeting those whom I should meet. I cannot do this if persons drop in at all hours simply to see me. People's affection for me is such that there is a stream of visitors throughout the day. In such conditions, I cannot work as much as I should like to do.

I would, therefore, request those readers of the *Navajivan* who are regular visitors to the Ashram not to come merely to see me. The better course for them would be to devote in carding, spinning and weaving the time they would spend in coming here to see me. Those who wish to put any questions to me would get a reply if they write to me.

Those who needs must come would save their time if they do so by appointment, or come between three and four in the afternoon. I would request that no one should in any case come in the morning, except by special appointment, as I devote my mornings to writing and such other work.

We shall accomplish our task in the time which remains with us only if we, who wish to serve the public, put ourselves and others to the best possible use from the point of view of public service. In doing so, I expect the fullest co-operation from the readers of *Navajivan*, at any rate, and I believe that if all readers of *Navajivan* make the best possible use of the advice given in it and act upon it, even that would take us to our destination in time. Truth, courage and hard work are essential. If we do not get swaraj this year, we shall have only our indolence to blame.

Hard-working men and women should take stock each day how their time has been spent and maintain a daily balance-sheet. They should not waste a single moment in idle talk, and should keep the good of the country in mind while earning a living. They should go further and devote their spare time wholly to national work.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

140. MY NOTES

My Surat Experiences

I have come back after a day's visit to Surat, where I had gone just to see how things were going.

There were invitations to visit Navasari, Kathor and other places, but I could not accept them. If in Gujarat too I go on visiting places, the purpose for which I have stopped touring would be defeated. It is best that I remain in the Ashram, write and make what suggestions I can from there.

I have done enough talking. If it is felt at any place that only my presence would infuse some strength into the people there, I think it is necessary that we should learn to do without such strength for the present. It is more necessary to increase our strength wherever we have acquired some and organize it so that it can be effectively employed. Only then shall we succeed in our resolve to win swaraj this year. Swaraj, in my view, lies in the skill with which, we are able to exploit the awakening in the country. At this stage, therefore, I can be of better service to the people by offering guidance and setting an example in spinning.

I had gone to Surat on a sort of inspection tour to see for myself how far it was ready for swaraj. I saw there a veritable sea of white caps and found khadi being used on a fairly large scale. I am not, however, likely to be taken in by these things.

There is little enthusiasm for khadi among women in Surat. They attended the meetings in large numbers but, I noticed, in saris of foreign material. With all that, the work they have done in the Surat District is quite considerable. At present, it seems to me, the competition is between Surat and Kheda. Nevertheless, I feel that Surat is still not strong enough to start civil disobedience. Not all the [Congress] workers of Surat have yet become proficient in carding, spinning and weaving. The city still does not have thousands of men who feel confident that, in the event of their imprisonment, their families will be able to maintain themselves without support from public funds by carding, weaving, etc.

But I do believe that Surat can be ready in this manner within a month. People there have come to appreciate the real value of swadeshi, only it has to be put on a firmer footing. For that, I think it is necessary that the workers in the District devote their energies exclusively to this work. Spinning and weaving should be given the first place in the existing schools. Teachers too should take up this work. There should be many, not just one, who can identify the varieties of yarn, its count, staple, etc. Till we are permeated through and through with the spirit of khadi, till our women have fallen in love with it, we shall not be fit for swaraj, for, till then, we shall not be in possession of the means of banishing hunger from the land and shall not, in consequence, be well-equipped for the service of the poor. Till we are, we lack the qualification to start civil disobedience.

I was asked in Surat what was to be done if people would not increase the use of khadi still further and take greater interest in spinning and weaving. The answer is simple. Do those of us who ask this question themselves spin and weave? If there is nothing further to be gained from trying to persuade others, why should we not utilize every moment of our time in making a science of carding, spinning and weaving and acquiring the highest proficiency in them? Should we not believe that by attaining perfection ourselves we shall be teaching perfection to others? A creeper needs a hedge against which to grow. There is no point in complaining that swadeshi is making no progress or that people take no interest in it. We do not have even 100 workers in every district who are experts in carding, weaving and spinning. With those hundred, we can train 1,00,000 more. But what can we do if we have none? I would, therefore, advise workers of the Surat District to attain and help others to attain perfection in swadeshi. They can certainly do this much, if not more, in this month. Swadeshi then will automatically spread everywhere. If with all

these efforts we do not succeed, we shall know that we are still not ready for swaraj. This is our work, whether we do it now or later.

Non-co-operation in Rander

While I was on my inspection tour of Surat I also visited Rander. I had been to Rander earlier too, and had then expressed my disappointment at people's lack of interest there.[1] But all that has changed. There is now a fine national school there, the wine shop has closed down and everywhere you see men in khadi. There is virtually no demand for foreign cloth. There is a large Muslim population in Rander, and some of them are millionaires. These last have set apart Rs. 60,000 worth of foreign cloth for being sent to Smyrna. Sons of wealthy Muslims have taken up picketing wine shops. Thus, from every point of view Rander has made great progress in non-co-operation. All this enthusiasm has come during the past two months, in the wake of Maulana Shaukat Ali's last visit to the place. True, the Rs. 25,000 which the people of Rander have contributed to the Angora Fund is far from enough for a community which can give lakhs, and the revered Maulana Azad Sobhani gave them a piece of his mind for that. I hope that, though the citizens of Rander have entered late in the race, they will outstrip all others in the Surat District in every matter. For this to happen, every youth and every woman in Rander should get busy with the spinning-wheel or the loom. The notion that a wealthy person need do no work should be banished from our minds. It has bred idleness and poverty among us. The rich too should work for the good of the people. Aurangzeb had little need to work, but he used to sew caps. We, who are already so poor, are doubly under obligation to work. Since we have become slaves through the use of foreign cloth, it is trebly our duty, for promoting swadeshi, to card, spin and weave.

Foolish Superstitions

A gentleman in Surat gave me ten rupees saying that the gift was in fulfilment of a resolution he had made. It seems someone had recovered from an illness after he had vowed that he would make an offering to me if he did so. I accepted the money, since it was for a charitable purpose, but asked the person who gave it to me not to accept in future money offered on such grounds. Our country labours under a crushing weight of superstitions and addition to it in my name would pain me very much indeed.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 36-7.

We shall not be able to take the country forward by adding to the number of our superstitions. The practice of making vows of this kind is an ancient one. It may be, as some people believe, that the element of faith in it is a good thing in itself, but I am convinced that the practice does not deserve to be encouraged. Hence, wherever people are found using my name in that way, they should be dissuaded from doing so. Such resolutions may be made in anyone's name and the practice will spread. If all those who vow to make an offering in a particular manner if they recover, some are bound to recover. The poor fellows do make the offering, but what connection could their recovery have had with their vow? I can understand those recovering from illness making some offering to me, if those who do not recover despite their vow could fine me. In the latter event, I would become bankrupt paying the fines and be left fit for no social service. But since I am not prepared to pay a fine to those who do not get well, I do not wish to accept gifts from those who do. It seems best to me that we should refuse a contribution even to a public cause, if it is offered in this manner.

What is true of superstitious vows is true also of the practice of offering reverence [to a human being]. The practices of touching a person's feet, of bowing with the whole body prostrated on the ground, waving lights before him, etc., also deserve to be discontinued. How much of people's time would be wasted if lakhs of them did these things? I am put out by all these people coming for my *darshan*. I would be driven crazy if all of them decided to prostrate themselves in reverence before me, or I would be compelled not to show even the courtesy of noticing them. I would, therefore, suggest that we should stand at a distance and fold our hands to the other person or salute him and give up all other formalities. People can come to no harm if we do so, for mutual respect is a matter of mental attitude and we can express it at the proper time. The only worship that I ask for, if I have at all earned it, is that the people should promptly act upon any suggestion of mine which they approve of and secure swaraj. That is the only real worship worth offering; worship in any other manner may be misplaced and we should refrain from offering it.

National Quality of National Schools

A correspondent asked a few questions some time ago to know in what the specifically national quality of a national school consisted. Of these I answer sonie which are likely to be of interest.

QUESTION : Will a student graduating from a national institution of learning be free from the worry of finding work for a living?

ANSWER : He should certainly be free from such worry. That is no knowledge which does not confer even this freedom. That alone is knowledge which helps one to win three kinds of freedom—economic, social and spiritual. One who does not have freedom of the first kind cannot possibly have that of any other kind.

Should not self-sacrifice be the sacred duty of everyone serving in a national institution?

Of course it should be. He who cannot give up self-interest cannot, in my opinion, become the servant of the nation.

Should not a *snataka*[1] dedicate his life to the service of the nation?

This principle does not apply always. After a nation's life has been organized on moral principles, whoever lives an honest, fearless life is doing some service.

When we say that Government schools do not build character at the same time that they impart knowledge, do we not mean that in a national institution character-building will get special attention?

That is certainly what we mean. Even imparting knowledge should aim at character-building. Knowledge is the means and character-building is the end.

You would, then, consider it essential that teachers of national institutions should have a strong moral character?

Of course.

Does this not mean that a teacher who smokes and drinks should be kept out of such institutions?

We have certainly risen to a high enough level to be able to do without a teacher who drinks. I dare not say the same thing with regard to smoking. I know from experience that a person who smokes may be upright in other ways. It is necessary to remember, while observing the moral character of others, that we do not become self-righteous watchmen.

It is pathetic, is it not, to see students becoming physical wrecks by the time they matriculate and being almost completely spent by the time they graduate?

[1] Graduate of the Gujarat Vidyapith, a national university of Ahmedabad established in October 1920

If I have any say in the matter, I would stop further education of any boy who had lost his health.

Is it not necessary that all the faculties of a pupil receiving national education should be developed?

Yes, of course, they should. He alone is healthy in mind who is healthy in body, and when the mind is healthy the soul also is healthy—this is obvious.

Is it not desirable to keep married students under the age of 21 out of national schools?

They should be, in theory. Married life and studies do not really go together.

Don't you think our education should spread the idea that a widower should not marry again?

I should certainly like education which does that.

Should corporal punishment have any place in a scheme of national education?

Certainly not.

If a student develops contempt for national education, whom would you hold responsible?

Generally, the teachers and the students both are responsible, but more often the teachers.

Don't you think languages figure too prominently in our school curricula?

Several languages of the same family cannot be much of a burden on the students. I believe that one can learn, for example, the four languages, Hindustani, Gujarati, Marathi and Bengali, without any strain. But English, Greek, Latin and Arabic have no common ground.

Shouldn't the teacher have a higher status in society than a minister? If the Viceroy could be paid Rs. 1,000, should not the teacher be paid Rs. 2,000?

There is a price on the Viceroy's services; there is none on the teacher's. He will, therefore, always be poor. He should be happy earning enough for his minimum needs and teaching. The Viceroy puts down his price; if the teacher did that, he would be useless as a teacher.

I give here my reply to a question put by another correspondent, since it concerns our present subject.

Should a teacher marry a girl who is his student? Likewise, should a boy marry a girl studying in his class?

I at any rate would consider both very improper. A girl who is my student should be as safe [with me] as my daughter, and a girl in my class as safe as a sister. That pure brother-and-sister relationship is the only proper relationship between boys and girls studying together. This is all I should like to say in reply to this question, but it is an important enough question for a fuller discussion. I have no doubt in my mind about the correctness of my reply to the first question. With regard to the second, however, I see some difficulties in these modern times when thousands of boys and girls attend the same school. In any case, in every institution that I have managed I have insisted on the foregoing rule being followed and the results have always been happy.

Flattering Weavers

A friend wonders whether it would not be profitable to plead with weavers as we have done with lawyers, merchants, students, etc. I have indeed said something about this in a previous issue and, if I do not write oftener on it, that is because weavers as a class are not literate and cannot read. There can be no doubt that, if a desire for serving the nation can be aroused among the artisans, and particularly among weavers, we would achieve the goal of swadeshi in a short time. Millions of weavers in the country—Hindus and Muslims—help foreign interests. They use foreign yarn worth millions of rupees in weaving, and some produced in our mills too. If, however, they exclusively accept hand-spun yarn for weaving and go on improving the quality, the country's face would brighten up and crores of rupees would find their way into the homes of our people.

If the weavers wake up and decide exclusively to weave hand-spun yarn, not only would millions earn a little by spinning but, along with them, thousands of others employed in ginning, carding and starching would get more work to do. The daily earnings of thousands of carpenters and blacksmiths would go up. Total swadeshi would not only bring a straight gain of 60 crores of rupees to the nation, but create work in other professions which would earn many more crores and revive beautiful arts and crafts which once flourished in the country. At present we have degenerated into mere unskilled labourers.

Everyone, therefore, can see the importance of inducing the weaver class to work for the service of the people. We can do this best by ourselves becoming weavers. It is one thing to approach weavers because we need their help, and quite another to tell them something for their own good. The only way to serve their good

is to learn their profession ourselves, understand the science of it and explain it to them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-10-1921

141. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

SABARMATI,
October 21, 1921

I have received the ruling and the statement of the President of the All-India Congress Committee and have read the statement thereon issued by Pandit Motilal Nehru. In my humble opinion the President's position is wholly untenable. It is for the All-India Committee to pronounce the final judgment on the President's ruling. But it will be against all constitutional usage to override the resolution of the Working Committee to convene a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee for the 4th November. I entirely endorse the position taken up by Pandit Motilal Nehru and hope that every member of the All-India Congress Committee will attend the meeting at Delhi on the 4th November. At the same time I recognize that the President feels conscientiously that the Working Committee has gone wrong in not disturbing the elections in Madras and Bengal. But it was equally a matter of conscience for the Working Committee not to disturb them. The All-India Congress Committee alone can be the final arbiter.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1921

142. OPTIMISM

Optimism indicates faith; only an atheist can be a pessimist. The optimist lives in fear of God, listens with humility to the inner voice, obeys its promptings and believes that God ordains everything for the best.

The pessimist vainly thinks that it is he who does everything. When he fails in some undertaking, he leaves himself out and blames others; indulges in vain prating about not being sure whether God exists and, finally, concluding that this world is worthless and he alone good, but that his merit is not recognized, puts an end to his life. If he does not do that, he merely endures an existence which is little better than death.

The optimist lives delighting in thoughts of love and charity and, since there is none whom he looks upon as his enemy, he moves without fear whether he is in the forest or in the midst of men. He has no fear of ferocious animals or equally dreadful men, for his soul cannot be bitten by snakes nor pierced by the sinner's sword. Such a one will not give too much thought to his body, will rather look upon it as a fragile vessel of glass which is fated to break some day and will not go roaming all over the world to preserve it in health. The optimist will not kill or harass any human being. With his inner ear ever attuned to the sweet music of his soul, he will live floating on an ocean of joy.

The pessimist, being himself a prey of violent attachments and dislikes, looks upon every person as his enemy and fears him. He has of course no such thing as the inner voice. Like the honey bee, he flits from pleasure to pleasure, daily tiring of them and daily seeking new ones and, finally, dies, unloved, unwept and unsung.

Such being my views, I hope no one will believe that I ever told anyone I would commit suicide if swaraj was not won this year. Except for saving oneself from rape, suicide is, according to me, a major sin and an act of cowardice. Why indeed should I commit suicide because India may not have won swaraj? If she sincerely desires swaraj, let her fight for it and get it. She has realized its value, and has even tasted of it. If now she cares enough for it, let her pay the price and secure it. Whether or not she does so, what reason is that for me to commit suicide?

I did, however, mention one thing before some friends. When asked what I would do if we had not got swaraj by January, I said I had so great a faith in the country that till the very end of December I would continue to believe that we would definitely get swaraj. What, therefore, I would do in January, I did not know at all, I said. With people's leave, I would retire to a solitary place and live by myself, or would welcome helping the country, to the best of my ability, in drafting its constitution under swaraj. I should not like to remain alive next year if we have not won swaraj by then. I am, in that event, likely to be pained so deeply that this body may perish—I would desire that it should.

I have seen so much suffering in the country, economic and moral, that, if I have not perished in the flames, it is because of the hope which people have inspired in me. "We shall have purified ourselves in a day", and "Today our millions will get some flesh on their skeletons"—I am sustained from day to day by such hopes. I believe that one year is enough in which to

realize them. In September [1920], I was the only one who believed and said that this was possible.

In December, others unanimously took up the programme. If now the Congress fails to fulfil its pledge, what would be the position of a person like me? It would surely mean bankruptcy for me no less than for the Congress. If, putting my trust in the Congress, I issue a draft and then find that it is not honoured, where should I turn? I very much desire that in the event of our failing to get swaraj [in this year], everyone else should suffer on January 1 as much as I would. Everyone should feel the want of dharma as much as of food.

A friend asked me if this was not cowardice. I do not think so. I see in it an expression of compassion; it is plain common sense to me. There is no point in continuing to give service when it is not valued as such and none in living if there is no good in it. When the body itself is worn out, would it not be better to live on the Ganga water and let it slowly perish than to keep it alive, a mere skeleton, by treating it with *vasantmalati*[1] or some such stuff? As far as I can see today, I shall never advise any course but "adopt swadeshi and win swaraj". If I cannot think of anything else at all, of what service can I possibly be?

We are now on the last rung of the ladder. To take a step further up without recouping ourselves where we stand would ultimately mean a set-back for us. I remember, when I was climbing the ghat for going up to Sinhgad[2], a point came beyond which I simply could not continue to climb. I could resume the climb only after I had rested for a while and regained my strength.

We are in the same position. Till we have completely succeeded in the swadeshi programme, we shall not get the strength to push forward. My remaining alive, therefore, or continuing to live in society, depends on the success of swadeshi.

This is how I see things; this is the state of my mind today. What tomorrow will bring, God alone knows.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-10-1921

1 An Ayurvedic drug

2 A mountain fort near Poona in Maharashtra

143. TO MILL-WORKERS

BROTHERS,

Ever since my return to Ahmedabad at the end of my tour, I have been hearing that the drink habit has decreased among all sections of people but that the liquor-booths which are frequented by mill-workers continue to flourish, that, moreover, the customers there pay no heed to volunteers, actually abuse them and even beat them. I do not know what truth there is in this. I am sure that there are hundreds of workers who would not approve of such conduct.

Those who are labouring in your cause have been doing so in the hope that you will reform yourselves and be happy, that you will give up your bad habits, learn to save money and pay off your debts, that you may have good houses to live in and your children may get education, that you will learn to be clean and, in your free time, will read good books and reflect over them, in every way, you should enjoy a good reputation in society.

Those who are trying to help you will not be satisfied by merely getting a wage-rise or some bonuses for you. If you accept their services only for securing an increase in wages and do not change your way of life, you will lose their services and public opinion, which today is on your side, will no longer be there.

Not only should you become good, but you should also take part in the holy movement of self-purification going on in the country today. You should understand and do your duty about the Khilafat and the Punjab agitations and in the movement for swaraj. If you wish to do so, you must give up your vices. We are carrying on this struggle in the name of God. Do you think God would help a drunkard, a gambler or a dissolute person? How can a Muslim addicted to drink serve the cause of the Khilafat? What help can a Hindu, who is given to drinking, render to his Muslim brother?

Whenever I raise with your employers the issue of wage-increase or bonus for you, they simply ask me : "What good do you hope to do by asking for increase in wages? Do you think the workers will spend the money to eat better food? Will they purchase better clothes? Will they educate their children? Will they not, rather, spend it on drinking more?" When I hear this, I hang

my head in shame. You should save me from this humiliation, and that you can do only by giving up drink.

You, readers, most likely do not drink; how, then, can you be held responsible for your co-workers? The answer to this question is that swaraj lies in accepting responsibility for one's associates. It is for you to win over other workers and shame them into reform. You should keep a watch on those of them who are drink-addicts. Yours should be the burden of improving them. It is only when, in this manner, you bring about a daily improvement in your conditions, that you will have earned a wage-rise, bonus and so on. You can easily see that public sympathy will not remain on your side for ever if you do not improve. I hope, therefore, that you will make every effort to rid yourselves of the evil of drinking.

Your well-wisher,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-10-1921

144. *MY NOTES*

CONDITIONS FOR VISITING

I keep getting requests to visit various parts of Gujarat. It was suggested that I should go to Dakor and other places. I also received requests to visit Petlad and Sojitra. I have, however, begged to be excused, till the end of this month at any rate. I have then to go to Delhi. After returning from Delhi, I intend to go round a little in Gujarat. I have certainly not given up my hopes of Gujarat. I assuredly cherish the hope that Gujarat will make every sacrifice in this holy fight and, therefore, I expect that I shall be taken to such places only where men and women use khadi for all purposes—on public holidays and important occasions, at home and outside. Everyone should see to it that my time is not wasted. Even if we have only one district well prepared, we shall be able to put up a strong fight and win. I shall be ready to encamp in such a district. For that, however, the following conditions must first be fulfilled:

1. Hindus and Muslims there should be living like blood-brothers; not in fear of each other, but in loving harmony.

2. The Hindus, Muslims, and Parsis in the district, all should be convinced in their hearts that victory on the Khilafat issue with India's help is possible only through a peaceful struggle.

3. The people of that district should have realized that, together with the spirit of non-violence, they need to have courage even to mount the gallows. At least one in a hundred must have such courage; that is, in a population of five lakhs, there should be not less than 5,000 such persons quietly determined to face death.

4. The Hindus of that district should have learnt to regard untouchability as a sin and to treat the *Bhangis*, *Dheds* and others with kindness.

So much by way of action on the mental plane. Besides this, as a token of their sincerity and proof of their zeal,

5. over 90% of the people of that district should have renounced the use of foreign cloth and should be wearing khadi made from yarn which they themselves have spun and got woven in their own district, and should possess one spinning-wheel for every ten persons among them, and this should be in actual operation.

It is not at all difficult to satisfy these conditions, and even one such district will be able to win swaraj. The whole of Gujarat prepared in this way, then, would undoubtedly win it. Similarly, if any district has one man in ten who is ready, if necessary to lay down his life for the cause, then, too, swaraj would be a certainty. The reader will see that there is but one explanation for all this. We describe our struggle as one of truth and non-violence. If our lives are filled with these, the fulfilment of the conditions mentioned should be but child's play to us. Moreover, we should all remember that we must not hate or abuse or insult our opponents—be they Englishmen or advocates of co-operation wearing the same skin that we do. We have to fight relying on our own strength, not maligning these people.

Ours is a civilized struggle, and to a civilized man none in this wide world is an enemy, none whatsoever.

Diwali

Diwali is near at hand. I have already indicated once before[1] how to prepare for it, but I touch upon the subject again. Let us purify ourselves in preparation for Diwali. The worship of the spinning-wheel is worship of the goddess Lakshmi, and so everyone should equip his home with one spinning-wheel of the best quality. We should produce at least some yarn on it and, for that purpose, it should be kept working for the whole day

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 9-10-1921.

by every member of the family taking a turn at it. The yarn so produced should be credited in our books to the country's account.

Children will of course want new things. Girls may be given dolls made from hand-spun khadi and boys may be given attractive satchels of khadi. Ropes made out of hand-spun yarn could be given to the children for a game of tug-of-war. We should get at least one garment of such khadi made for every person in the family, though we should spend on buying only as much even of khadi as we need.

Children who ask for crackers should be told that the time for them will come only when we have got swaraj and hunger has been banished. Till hunger has disappeared, we simply cannot spend anything on crackers; but, in order to cleanse ourselves we could have on the Diwali day a pretty good bonfire of whatever foreign clothes still remain with us and enjoy the sight of our own garments in flames.

A Jain correspondent, however, points out that innumerable insects perish in these bonfires and there is so much destruction of life—the sight is simply unbearable. Would it not be better, he asks, to put away our garments of foreign cloth and lock them up? From the present Jain point of view, this is a relevant question. That the smallest insects are our kin, our brethren, and that it is our dharma, therefore, to have compassion on them,—these are deathless words. But we cannot stop there. Despite their truth, we light ovens and cremate dead bodies. Creation as much as destruction is a form of violence. There is no destruction not followed by creation and no creation which is not preceded by destruction. We cannot escape paying for our own actions. If we admit that we must give up the use of foreign cloth, destroying it through fire does the least degree of violence. In a situation in which we are obliged to choose between two forms of violence, we can do no more than choose the lesser one. If the garments are locked away, white ants, etc., will get at them and the work of destruction and creation will proceed so rapidly that destruction through fire would have been a much lesser evil. There is less violence in at once killing a man than in letting him starve to death. This is why I have said that it is against the principles of our struggle to refuse to supply food and water to anyone living in our midst. For the present, however, I shall not go deeper into this question, for we can discuss it more fully when we have an opportunity some other time. Here, I shall only state my opinion that setting fire to garments of foreign cloth is, from every point of view, an act of lesser

violence and is necessary for the good of India and hence for that of the world.

But what can Diwali possibly mean to Muslims? It is purely a Hindu festival. For this very reason I would suggest that Muslims too should associate themselves with it. The religious part of it will of course be for the Hindus only, but as it is for them a festival day, the Muslims too might join in and, to the extent that it can be used to serve the cause of the whole nation, they and all the other communities should join in celebrating the day. We should also offer our greetings to Muslims, Parsis and Christians on their respective New Year Days and join in any public celebrations they may have on those days. It is surely our duty to share one another's joys and sorrows. I hope, therefore, that during this Diwali festival of the Hindus, all the other communities will join in the celebrations and help forward the cause of swadeshi in every possible way.

Message of Spinning-wheel in the "Gita"

In last Sunday's issue of the *Navajivan*, I tried to answer the Poet's[1] arguments on the subject of the spinning-wheel. I said in the course of my reply that personally I read the message of the spinning-wheel even in the *Gita*. In support of my argument, I quoted some verses from Chapter III. I know full well that the meaning I have read into them will not be found in any of the commentaries on the book, interpreted literally. It is not recently that I have come to read the meaning which I do; I have read it, the commentaries notwithstanding, since 1909. The verse says that he is a thief who eats without performing *yajna*. If here we understand the meaning of *yajna* rightly, there will be no difficulty in accepting the interpretation I have put upon it. The straightforward meaning of the line, "*Yajna* brings rain"[2] can only be that, if man labours trees will grow and if trees grow they will attract rain. Physical work for the welfare of the people is the only true *yajna*. The *yajna* in which some living creature, or be it even fruit, is given as an offering is no true *yajna*. Agriculture is one such *yajna* for the welfare of all. The farmer consumes only a part of the fruit of his labour; whether he means to or not, he toils chiefly for the people. Not everyone, however, can take up this work; it requires a strong body hardened by work in cold and heat. But

[1] Rabindranath Tagore; the reference is to a Gujarati translation of Gandhiji's article, "The Great Sentinel", 13-10-1921.

[2] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 14

everyone can operate the spinning-wheel. Even a scientist like Dr. Ray has convincingly showed how a man, though he may not be able to support himself exclusively by the spinning-wheel, may still help in meeting the people's needs. Today, moreover, when the country is on the verge of ruin, the spinning-wheel is the only means of saving it. Spinning, therefore, is a true *yajna*. "He who does not conform to this universal wheel lives merely for the gratification of his own desires, lives his life, in other words, to no purpose."[1] At the present time, that universal wheel can mean for us only the spinning-wheel. It is possible that, when the verse in question was written, the great poet and seer might not have had the spinning-wheel in mind, but then poets write for all time and it is the perfection and beauty of a poem that it lends itself to meanings which its author never had in mind. As statements of principles, such lines are timeless. They yield rich fruit. It is my humble opinion that we have a right to pluck any number of beautiful fruits which may grow on the tree of such priceless and imperishable poetry. Poet and menial, master and servant, mistress and maid, all must work for the common good. The millionaire may not work or ply the spinning-wheel for himself, but he must for the sake of the country and the people; otherwise, in the words of the *Gita*, he lives his life to no purpose.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-10-1921

145. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD[2]

October 23, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said that the subject of swadeshi was worn threadbare, and, if after twelve months of preaching in season and out of season, he had not driven conviction home to the people, no useful purpose would be served by crying himself hoarse at the present moment, more particularly because there were some in the audience who had apparently cast his message to the four winds. In the columns of *Navajivan* he had week after week been ringing changes on the immutable truth that if they wanted to see *Ramarajya* once more restored in India, he could conceive of no *other* efficient weapon than the determined effort put forth by women to wear khadi. Had they followed in the footsteps of Sita, the history of India would have been

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 16
[2] Under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Rashtriya Stree Mandal

written far otherwise. With the spirit that flinched not at the privations of forest life she went into a voluntary exile, and were the same constancy to prevail in India, the attainment of *dharmarajya* was only a question of time.

If they desired to compel respect after the manner of Sita, they should set aside indolent repose and turn with ever increasing earnestness and enthusiasm to the charkha.

The yarn they would turn out by assiduously plying the spinning-wheels would cover the nakedness of India and deliver her from the slough of economic serfdom.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi went on to observe that service was in the nature of religion to women. Animated by the will to serve they would bring about the salvation of the country far more effectively than the graduates in their midst. India wanted men and women who would freely move among the working classes and share their joys and sorrows. Indiscriminate charity which deprived beggars of all incentive to work was fraught with danger to self-reliance and the only way to strike at the root of mendicancy was to induce the beggar to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow by means of the spinning-wheel. He had decided to put on a loin-cloth in consideration of India's nakedness and would be ill at ease until all and sundry worked at spinning-wheels to clothe the scantily-clad millions. If they were attracted to the meeting out of curiosity to see him dressed in a loin-cloth, if they put on khadi to keep up appearances they would be practising a trick on him. They might deceive him and even deceive themselves by dissembling their real sentiments, but by no means that human ingenuity could devise, could they deceive God. It was idle to continue to wear foreign clothes on the ground of exhausting the existing stock. Would they drink liquor if they had a bottle of wine in stock. On no specious excuses could they justify the use of foreign clothes, when once they were convinced of their impurity. Did not Sita reject the costly garments in preference to the *valkals* (leafy clothing) in the Ashoka Forest? It was her heroic defence of chastity against numerous temptations and threats that secured her primacy of position in the salutation: "Sita-Rama". If they excelled in the refinements of the culinary art, they could as well show proficiency in spinning the finest yarns. He looked forward to seeing them all dressed in khadi on the occasion of the forthcoming session of the Congress. They had hitherto cheerfully given anything he demanded and he felt confident that the response to his demand for delivering foreign clothes would be equally generous.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

146. *MESSAGE TO TEACHERS OF BOMBAY NATIONAL COLLEGE*[1]

October 24, 1921

Card, spin, weave;
Spin, weave, card;
Weave, card, spin.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 117

147. *LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI*

SABARMATI,
October 24, 1921

BHAISHRI BANARASIDAS,

Your letter. I wish you too should now write nothing to Mr. Jehangir Petit.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 2560

148. *LETTER TO D. B. SHUKLA*[2]

SABARMATI,
Tuesday, Aso Vad 9 [October 25, 1921]

BHAISHRI,

You are pressing me to visit Kathiawar. I am also eager to go and see for myself the enthusiasm which has spread and the self-purification which has come about among the people of Kathiawar, and see the blessed sight of thousands of women dressed in sacred khadi.

But you know I am helpless at present. I can only say that

[1] Asked by the teachers of the College for advice as to how they should best spend their vacation, Gandhiji, who was observing silence, wrote this.

[2] This was sent by the addressee to *Gujarati* for publication in its Diwali issue. It was, however, published in a subsequent issue under the caption "Gandhiji's Message to Kathiawar".

I will take the first opportunity to go there. All India now knows that there is no limit to my greed, and it will [of course] not be satisfied as long as there is a single home without a spinning-wheel or a single street without a handloom or a carding-bow. You have done much but I know for a certainty that you have not done this. It is, therefore, my special appeal to one and all that they devote their attention to carrying out the swadeshi [programme] even if that means putting aside other activities. I can say from the experience of my own deficiencies that, until the volunteers become expert in carding and weaving, they cannot work properly.

I hear that in Kathiawar the *Antyajas* are looked down upon and ill-treated. They still encounter hardships on trains. We have not come to regard them as our own brothers and sisters and, so long as we lack this spirit of love, I would consider the so-called self-purification as no more than make-believe. I pray that Kathiawar will not tolerate this outrage which is being committed in the name of religion.

I am convinced that Kathiawar need not rule out the other activities which are part of the struggle being specially carried on in British India. I know that in some places the relations between the princes and their subjects are strained. I am confident that, if people devote themselves to the two activities I have mentioned above and go on working silently the other difficulties will automatically be solved. I would advise the people to put up with the hardships they may have to suffer meanwhile.

I believe that the position of the princes is worse than that of their subjects. Moreover, the chaotic conditions in the Indian States about which I hear are, in my view, but an echo of the far greater chaos prevailing in British India. And why should we get involved in this matter at the present juncture? If we have come to know God, why not trust to Him in regard to all our inevitable sufferings? Those who fear God become free from other fears. I should, therefore, like you to give up all fear.

Respects from
Your younger brother,
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 6-11-1921

149. *NOTES*

MUNICIPALITIES BEWARE

The Government of Bombay note regarding the Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad municipalities shows that it refuses to see the writing on the wall. Its dictatorial tone is now no longer in keeping with the rising spirit of the people. Its incitement to the individual ratepayers to sue the councillors who believe they have performed their duty is hardly dignified. The proper course for the Government was to let the municipalities take their own course and not to invite trouble. As it is, the Government note is calculated to precipitate a crisis. The councillors must take up the challenge and dare the Government to disregard the municipalities if they choose. The municipalities must have the right to misgovern themselves if they wish. If a city is misgoverned, it is as much the ratepayers' fault as is the councillors'. But our wise Government whilst recognizing the independent existence of the municipalities wants to stick to the letter of the law which killeth and would itself rule instead of letting the municipalities alone so long as they do not cost the Government anything. The municipalities must now take up the challenge and prepare for action on their part. Government may succeed in getting a few ratepayers to file suits. That will be the least it can do. The most it can do is to disband the municipalities concerned. And the most of the Government should prove most welcome, if only the protestants are a strong body. Assuming that they are, they must simply educate the ratepayers to understand what is happening and to prepare them for battle. I can see swaraj peeping even through the Government note if the latter take and the former are ready for action. So long as there is no disbandment, the municipalities have all power; as soon as there is disbandment, the Government is powerless assuming of course that the ratepayers are strong, intelligent and united. The ratepayers are all that but they require to be organized for action. Hitherto the people have been the football of officials or so-called representatives. Non-co-operation enables the people to become the players in the game. Representatives *must* represent or they perish.

THE VISITORS TO THE CONGRESS

The Reception Committee of the Congress is trying to make the Congress session a purely business session. In its anxiety to do

so, it has restricted its own number and the number of visitors. It was impossible to avoid limitation of the number of visitors when the number of delegates was limited. The question therefore before the Committee was to devise a method of selection. The only qualification possible was a monetary qualification subject to free tickets for a few distinguished guests. The idea is purely to restrict the number of applicants, not to make money. For the first time, the annual gathering will cease to be an instrument for collecting funds for the annual expenditure. Elaborate preparations including exhibition, musical concerts and popular lectures by all the celebrated speakers of the day for a fee of eight annas per day are in progress. The prohibitive fee has been imposed only for visitors to the Congress session, the idea being to discourage applications from visitors. I am anxious that the public should understand and appreciate the position of the Reception Committee upon whose shoulders devolves the responsibility of organizing the first session under the new constitution and under exceptional circumstances. The success of the Congress depends principally upon the willing and hearty co-operation of every member of the public.

War on the Khadi Cap

Mr. Dharamadas Udharam of Karachi writes, saying that he was cashiered by his employers Messrs Forbes Campbell and Co., for having dared to wear the khadi cap. I congratulate him upon his courage in accepting dismissal rather than giving up his cap. If he were not demoralized, every clerk serving no matter where would invite dismissal by a simultaneous adoption of the khadi cap. This would really have the effect of the firms recognizing the inevitable and seeing the folly of warring against harmless dress. Indeed this war is being waged to strike awe among employees and keep them submissive and even unmanly. In Madras the Director of Public Instruction will not allow the inspectors of schools to introduce spinning-wheels if only because, the Director says, they are given a political significance. On the same reasoning even a lecture on abstinence should be taboo because it has for non-co-operators a political significance. This war against swadeshi in a variety of ways shows that it is distasteful to the Government. In other words the Government cannot tolerate the economic independence of India. Should these indications not make us resolute in the prosecution of the swadeshi programme?

SOLDIERS

The prosecution of the Brothers and their companions and the Manifesto[1] have reached the barracks, and soldiers are inquiring how they can support themselves if they leave. One correspondent asks on their behalf as to what would happen to them under swaraj. As for the first, the Working Committee has shown them the way. Every soldier can easily become a weaver and carder. Carding requires strength of arm which every soldier must have. And a carder in Bombay earns anything between two to three rupees per day. Many weavers of the Punjab have left the handloom for the sword of the hireling. I consider the former to be infinitely preferable to the latter. I refuse to call the profession of the sepoy honourable when he has no choice as to the time when and the persons or people against whom he is called upon to use his sword. The sepoy's services have more often been utilized for enslaving us than for protecting us, whereas the weaver today can truly become the liberator of his country and hence a true soldier.

A friend has suggested, that agriculture should also be added to weaving and carding advised by the Congress. It cannot be as an immediate measure, because, agriculture cannot be taken up with ease, and it requires a capital outlay which renders it impracticable for our purpose.

What will happen during swaraj is easily answered. The soldiers will not then be hirelings, but they will form the national militia for defensive and protective purposes alone. They will have a voice in the moulding of the affairs of the nation. And they will certainly never be sent to cut down inoffensive Turks or Arabs in the West or equally inoffensive Chinese or Burmese in the East.

IN DEFENCE OF MR. TYAGI

Babu Bhagwandas who has been closely following the movement has sent in the following learned note[2] in defence of Mr. Tyagi.

The reader will note that I made some amends last week as soon as I saw Mr. Tyagi's statement.[3] I considered the caution to be necessary because of my experience of our silence being a result of our weakness. Unfortunately it is not confined to the indi-

[1] On the Karachi Resolution; *vide* "A Manifesto", 4-10-1921.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] *Vide* "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles "A Magistrate's Apology", and "Accused's Statement".

vidual. It has become a national vice. When I cited Mr. Tyagi, his case was merely the latest illustration of that vice. As I have explained before now, bad as the Moplah madness is, the fact of others having submitted to the madness is worse. Why did they live to tell the tale of their forcible conversions? Nobody can keep our religion for us. Each one of us man or woman must be one's own defender. God who has given us religion has given also the power of defending it. Everyone has not the power to strike; all, the lame, the blind and the dumb have the power to die. The cowardly assault by the magistrate was an attack on Mr. Tyagi's manhood and therefore his religion. By some act of his, be it called defiance, impudence, insolence, he ought to have invited more slaps and "created a peaceful scene". This would have been truest non-co-operation. But I do not blame Mr. Tyagi or anybody. Manliness has been deliberately killed out of us. And we have been disarmed into mute submission. As the author of non-violence in its modern presentation I am anxious to guard myself against our weakness being apotheosized. I would far rather not shower congratulations for bravery till we are positive about it. For the rest, we have every reason to be thankful for the progress we have made in shedding our fear and awe of authority. Non-co-operation arms both the weak and the strong with a powerful weapon. And I should not be ashamed of our submission to insults even out of weakness so long as we realized that it was due to weakness and attempted every time to outgrow it.

Babu Bhagwandas is curious to know what could be worse than fear. I had in mind cowardice.

It is curious to note that whilst Babu Bhagwandas has in view of Mr. Tyagi's statement and in ignorance of my amends, rightly protested against my condemnation of weakness I hastily inferred in Mr. Tyagi's case, Maulana Mahomed Ali has, as will appear from his letter[1] printed elsewhere, energetically protested against his action being called a defiance. The word "defence" occurring in my notes at the end was a misprint for "defiance".[2] These protests are to me most welcome signs of the national desire to be correct to a fault. The Maulana will not appropriate even credit for an act which might, judged from the highest standard, be considered a breach of culture, and Babu Bhagwandas will not let me impute fearsomeness to an act which might be capable of being

[1] *Vide* "A Gaol Letter", 27-10-1921.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "Their Inconsistency".

understood to be strictly in accord with non-violence of the brave. Let us close the controversy with the hope and the prayer, that our country may become brave and yet gentle and chivalrous to a nicety.

Young India, 27-10-1921

150. TO CORRESPONDENTS

BISHANDAS CHADDAH: You should visit important centres in India and study the indigenous art before proceeding elsewhere. You will find the German spinning-wheel producing no more than ours.

BHAGIRATH MISHRA: When you are non-co-operating in respect of a whole system which you deem evil, you cannot co-operate with it because another crops up. You must, in that case, non-co-operate in respect of both. Hence my "threat" to seek the shelter of the Himalayas, should violence become universal in India and should it not have engulfed me.

M. S. SHANKARARAMAN: Ritual is often a help to worship. Prayer is the intensest longing of the soul and is indispensable to our evolution.

BINDUMADHAV: One thing at a time is a golden rule. If we were to taboo many things, we shall succeed in tabooing everything else we desire. When you have shaken the centre, the rest falls at a touch.

Young India, 27-10-1921

151. A GAOL LETTER

"NONE SHALL PREVAIL BUT GOD"

JAIL,
KARACHI,
October 18, 1921

DEAR BAPU,

Naturally I have long been thinking of writing to you, but for one reason or another I put it off from day to day. However, when I read in the papers more than one reference from your pen to my wife's action after my arrest at Waltair and to her subsequent activities, I felt impelled to write to you, if only a line,—a thing so difficult for me as you have publicly admitted!—just to tell you how deeply you had touched me.

As I have told you once perhaps, ours was a "love-marriage" from the very first, which is somewhat uncommon in India; but even apart from that every year of our married life made my wife a dearer partner to me than she was before, and the way she took the last few eventful years of internment and incarceration and of the "risks" we have been running since our release at the end of 1919, endeared her to me more than ever. But to tell you the truth she was never half so dear to me as I found her at Waltair when she stepped into the little Railway Police station, and jauntily asking me not to worry about her or the girls, bade me good-bye and marched off steadily to the train—all within a minute or two. Well, I have read more than one reference in your writings to my own self or to "the Brothers" all too complimentary and I am too "natural" to deny that every such reference gave me pleasure and quickened my pulse. More than once I have read a "defence" or an "apology" from your pen when you stood up for us against some critic's onslaught and cheered us up at a time when we were tempted to be not a little irascible. But nothing you have yet written in praise or in defence of us has gladdened my heart so much as your repeated reference to my dear brave wife! Indeed I have been so deeply touched that I am even inclined to forgive you and not be jealous of you for the seductive praise you have showered on her! So there! I only hope this very trying trial will now soon be over and she will be free once more to continue her work and earn more seductive praise from you.

By the way, I wonder if you ever saw my letter to Tairsee in which I gave him some idea of the things as they actually happened on the fourth day of the Magisterial Inquiry. You who know how vilely even the *Chronicle* reported my speeches can perhaps understand how risky it is to form one's opinion about affairs and incidents "reported" by "amateur" journalists innocent of all knowledge of stenography and so interested in hearing and seeing things when they become unusually lively as to ignore altogether the duty of noting them down for the paper they represent. When I was not in a prison, I had not enough time at my disposal, nor enough patience to go about correcting *every day* the inaccuracies in the reports of my speeches. Now that prison life gives me more leisure and preparation for a convict's life necessitates the cultivation of greater patience, I am not as free as I used to be to leave such inaccuracies uncorrected. But surely that is no reason for people to place implicit reliance in the printed word. When I read the meagre and inaccurate and wholly misleading reports of the court proceedings of the fourth day, I felt that we would be misjudged by some people at least, and as I was referring in my letter to Tairsee to the awful topsyturvydom of the *Chronicle* which misplaced paragraphs and sentences by the dozens in the report of my statement, I also took the opportunity

of mentioning some of the circumstances which led to the "defiance" of the Court. But really we were *not* "out for mischief". For three days the proceedings went on smoothly and the Court could not accuse us of "defiance" any more than the Counsel for the Crown could accuse us of "defence." But the trouble began with Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb's statement. The Court refused to call a qualified interpreter, and it was this that led Kitchlew to insist on speaking in Urdu when the Magistrate wanted to begin with another of the co-accused for whom the interpreter would not, he said, be needed. On the following day the atmosphere was entirely changed though we do not know what led to the change over-night. It was the Court that was "defiant". Kitchlew's statement which was on the same lines as mine was objected to at every fresh sentence and the Magistrate would not take it down. Then he insisted on asking the Shankaracharya to get up if he wanted to make a statement, which, the Shankaracharya said, he could not do on religious grounds. It was this which compelled me to expostulate with the Magistrate *without any passion*. I asked him whether he would insist on a religious personage of the Shankaracharya's position in the Hindu hierarchy paying respect to the conventions of a law-court even if he thereby had to show disregard of what he considered divine law itself. The Magistrate belonged to a community the origin of which in the history of India dated back to a migration from its own motherland for fear of having to disregard what it considered divine law. He had such a great belief in the respect due to a British law-court. Had he no belief in God? And all that appears in the papers is the bare interrogatory : "Have you no belief in God?" His reply to my appeal was an order in the worst possible tone to sit down. But while I refused to comply, I *never* said, "Let me see what you can do." I said he could use *force*; but there was no law which could compel an accused person to sit down. Poor Shaukat did his best to placate the Magistrate and pleaded with him not to interrupt him while he was making his statement, as it put him off completely. But clearly the Magistrate was determined that nothing like my statement of the previous day should go on record now or be even heard by those co-operators and others who attended his court. When Maulana Hussain Ahmed Saheb began his statement, he neither got it interpreted by the Court interpreter (who had already confessed his incompetence to interpret an exposition of Islamic law) nor made the least effort to understand what the Maulana Saheb was saying. Nothing was taken down. But even this was not enough. His indifference was impudent enough, but he added to that one or two direct insults, such as, "It is not necessary to recite the entire Quran here." Maulana Niser Ahmed Saheb's very brief statement fared no better. And so indifferent was the Magistrate to every requirement of law and procedure that he

committed us to the Sessions *without* having received the remainder of my statement which *at his own request* I had promised to give in writing if he sent me a shorthand typist. But then the whole thing was *meant* to be a farce; for on the very *second* day when even the Prosecution evidence was not half-finished, he passed order on the Public Prosecutor's application for summons being issued for two witnesses to the effect that it served no purpose to lengthen proceedings unnecessarily, and it would suffice if these witnesses were summoned for the Sessions trial! A foregone conclusion even for the Magistrate!! And on the 29th before the inquiry was over, the Judicial Commissioner comes himself to inspect the Hall for the Sessions and discusses the plans with the Public Prosecutor!!! As I said to the Court, they might as well have sent the carpenters to prepare the scaffold! When any reference was made to Islamic law, the Magistrate was impatient and used to say, "We have nothing to do with *fatwas* here". Shaukat was so exasperated that he said to him, "What is the use of your asking me about such trifles? Ask me what Islamic law lays down for such a set of circumstances." But all in vain, and even Shaukat could stand this no longer and "the whole blessed show"! But would you believe it, soon after this inquiry was over and the Magistrate retired for a time, he was a new man once more! In the second case against Shaukat and in the next case against me, he was once more the man he had been on the third day. What brought about this second metamorphosis I cannot say. But you can judge of the "normal" atmosphere of the Court (including the accused) from the fact that on the last day the Public Prosecutor came hurrying to me and asked, "Will you mind coming back into the court? One of the witnesses has put in the wrong exhibit and I should like to recall him." I agreed and said, "Anything you please," and when the C.I.D. reporter had sworn again that the exhibit he was then putting in was my speech, I pleasantly told the Magistrate I waived my right of demanding the witness's prosecution for perjury for swearing before that quite another document was my speech, and the Magistrate equally pleasantly thanked me! The fact is the Magistrate, as we all knew, was always an automaton (and I told him on the eventful day I was sorry that a fellow-countryman of mine was being used to do a dirty job), but on the day following my statement he came "wound up." Since then, I understand, even those from whom he expected praise for his loyalty and compliance have expressed their indignation at his spoiling a "historic state trial", which was intended to typify "justice" under "the New Dispensation" by his disregard of law and procedure. That is why Ross Alston of Allahabad and Alim are coming to improve the thing as best they can, and a qualified interpreter is coming from Lahore. But the whole thing was a farce and nothing can improve it. For our

part, we have no desire to be defiant and are *not* out for mischief. Nevertheless we are not going to be dumb driven cattle, and non-violence does not require that passivity. Violence has much to answer for and many a Mussulman will have his eyes opened on the day of judgment when the true limits of "violence" are to be defined once more by his own leading case. But non-violence too has a good deal to answer for, and I already see that its apostle is already disillusioning some of its meek votaries who would cover cowardice with that label.

And good-bye now. Love to Devdas and the little ones and affectionate salaams to Ba.

The cheque must have been sent to the Khilafat Fund. Mother and my wife do not need any financial assistance, but we are such awful beggars that we will swallow everything for our cause. Our affectionate greetings to your own great and dear self.

Yours ever,
MAHOMED ALI

I am sure that the reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing letter with him for more reasons than one. In my opinion it is a human document showing the whole of the man in the Maulana. The letter had naturally to be passed by the Magistrate. I had not the heart to expunge a single word from the letter.

Young India, 27-10-1921

152. HONOUR THE PRINCE

The reader must not be surprised at the title of this writing. Supposing that the Prince was a blood brother in a high place, supposing that he was to be exploited by neighbours for their own base ends, supposing further that he was in the hands of my neighbours, that my voice could not effectively reach him and that he was being brought to my village by the said neighbours, would I not honour him best by dissociating myself from all the ceremonial that might be arranged in his "honour" in the process of exploitation and by letting him know by every means at my disposal that he was being exploited? Would I not be a traitor to him if I did not warn him against entering the trap prepared for him by my neighbours?

I have no manner of doubt that the Prince's visit is being exploited for advertising the "benign" British rule in India. It is a crime against us if His Royal Highness is being brought for personal pleasure and sport when India is seething with discontent, when the masses are saturated with disaffection towards the sys-

tem under which they are governed, when famine is raging in Khulna and the Ceded Districts and when an armed conflict is raging in Malabar; it is a crime against India to spend millions of rupees on a mere show when millions of men are living in a state of chronic starvation. Eight lakhs of rupees have been voted away by the Bombay Council alone for the pageant.

The visit is being heralded by repression in the land. In Sind over fifty-six non-co-operators are in jail. Some of the bravest of Mussulmans are being tried for holding certain opinions. Nineteen Bengal workers have been just imprisoned including Mr. Sengupta, the leading barrister of the place. A Mussulman Pir and three other selfless workers are already in jail for a similar "crime". Several leaders of Karnatak are also imprisoned, and now its chief man is on trial for saying what I have said repeatedly in these columns and what Congressmen have been saying all over during the past twelve months. Several leaders of the Central Provinces have been similarly deprived of their liberty. A most popular doctor, Dr. Paranjapye, a man universally respected for his selflessness, is suffering rigorous imprisonment like a common felon. I have by no means exhausted the list of imprisonments of non-co-operators. Whether they are a test of real crime or an answer to growing disaffection, the Prince's visit is, to say the least, most inopportune. There is no doubt that the people do not want His Royal Highness to visit India at the present juncture. They have expressed their opinion in no uncertain terms. They have declared that Bombay should observe hartal on the day of his landing at Bombay. It is a clear imposition upon the people to bring the Prince in the teeth of their opposition.

What are we to do in the circumstances? We must organize a complete boycott of all functions held in the Prince's honour. We must religiously refrain from attending charities, fetes or fireworks organized for the purpose. We must refuse to illuminate or to send our children to see the organized illuminations. To this end we must publish leaflets by the million and distribute them amongst the people telling them what their duty in the matter is and it would be true honour done to the Prince if Bombay on the day of his landing wears the appearance of a deserted city.

But we must isolate the Prince from the person. We have no ill will against the Prince as man. He probably knows nothing of the feeling in India, he probably knows nothing about repression. Equally probably he is ignorant of the fact that the Punjab wound is still bleeding, that the treachery towards India in the matter of the Khilafat is still rankling in every Indian breast, and

that on the Government's own admission the reformed councils contain members who, though nominally elected, do not in any sense represent even the few lakhs who are on the electoral rolls. To do or to attempt to do any harm to the person of the Prince would be not only cruel and inhuman, but it would be on our part a piece of treachery towards ourselves and him, for we have voluntarily pledged ourselves to be and remain non-violent. Any injury or insult to the Prince by us will be a greater wrong done by us to Islam and India than any the English have done. They know no better. We can lay no such claim to ignorance, we have with our eyes open and before God and man promised not to hurt a single individual in any way connected with the system we are straining every nerve to destroy. It must therefore be our duty to take every precaution to protect his person as our own from all harm.

In spite of all our effort, we know that there will be some who would want to take part in the various functions from fear or hope or choice. They have as much right to do what they like as we have to do what we like. That is the test of the freedom we wish to have and enjoy. Let us, whilst we are being subjected by an insolent bureaucracy to a severe irritation, exercise the greatest restraint. And if we can exhibit our firm resolve to have nothing to do with it by dissociating ourselves from its pageant at the same time that we show forbearance towards those who differ from us, we would advance our cause in a most effective manner.

Young India, 27-10-1921

153. THE SECRET OF IT

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is an education which is developing and crystallizing public opinion. And as soon as it is organized enough for effective action, we have swaraj. We cannot organize public opinion in a violent atmosphere. Just as those who have been forced by the Moplahs to recite the *kalma* are no Mussulmans, even so those who call themselves non-co-operators from fashion or compulsion are no non-co-operators. They are a hindrance and no help. Our tyranny, if we impose our will on others, will be infinitely worse than that of the handful of Englishmen who form the bureaucracy. Theirs is a terrorism imposed by a minority struggling to exist in the midst of opposition. Ours will be a terrorism imposed by a majority and therefore worse and really more godless than the first. We must therefore elimi-

nate compulsion in any shape from our struggle. If we are only a handful holding freely the doctrine of non-co-operation, we may have to die in the attempt to convert others to our view, but we shall have truly defended and represented our cause. If however we enlist under our banner men by force, we shall be denying our cause and God, and if we seem to succeed for the moment, we shall have succeeded in establishing a worse terror.

We shall also retard our cause if we suppress opinion by intolerance. For then we shall never know who is with us and who is against us. The indispensable condition therefore of success is that we encourage the greatest freedom of opinion. It is the least we can learn from the present "masters". Their Penal Code contains drastic punishments for holding opinions they do not like. And they have arrested some of the noblest of our countrymen for expression of their opinion. Our non-co-operation is a defiantly open protest against that system. We may not in the very act of fighting the restraint on opinion be guilty ourselves of imposing it on others. These reflections are due to a sense of uneasiness I feel about publishing the names of correspondents who express opinions we may not relish. I do not wish to expose them to the mental violence of the readers who may not like those opinions. We must have the courage and the charity to hear or read all sorts of nasty things said about us or to us. It gives us an opportunity of converting them. I propose to make the attempt in respect of a correspondent who has sent me a formidable list of questions about the struggle which deserve public notice. He commences thus:

> You will admit that both your followers and non-followers are in a state of suspense as regards the aims of your political activities. Can you therefore be charitable enough to enlighten them by answering the following questions?
>
> 1. Are you really a Mahatma?

I do not feel like being one. But I do know that I am among the humblest of God's creatures.

> 2. If so, will you define the word Mahatma?

Not being acquainted with one, I cannot give any definition.

> 3. If not, did you ever tell your followers that you are not one?

The more I repudiate, the more it is used.

> 4. Is your "soul-force" attainable by the ignorant masses?

They have it already in abundance. Once upon a time an expedition of French scientists set out in search of knowledge

and in due course reached India. They tried hard to find it, as, they had expected, among the learned ones but failed. Unexpectedly they found it in a pariah home.

5. You say, machinery has been the bane of civilization. Then why do you allow yourself to travel in railway trains and motor cars?

There are certain things which you cannot escape all at once, even whilst you are avoiding them. This earthy case in which I am locked up is the bane of my life, but I am obliged to put up with it and even indulge in it as this friend knows. But does he seriously doubt that the machine age was responsible for the organized murders during the late war? Asphyxiating gas and such other abominations have not advanced us by an inch.

6. Is it a fact that formerly you travelled third-class in railway trains and now you travel in special trains and first-class carriages?

Alas! the correspondent is correctly informed. The Mahatmaship is responsible for the special trains, and the earthy case for the degradation to the second-class.

7. In what relation do you stand to Count Tolstoy?

As a devoted admirer who owes much in life to him.

8. Why do you not define swaraj? Do you not feel that you are in duty bound to define the word at least to your followers?

In the first place the word is indefinable; in the second place, if the correspondent will turn to the file of *Young India*, he will find a workable definition there. I will try another here. It means complete freedom of opinion and action without interference with another's right to equal freedom of opinion and action. Therefore it means India's complete control of sources of revenue and expenditure without interference from or with any other country.

9. What will be your own position when swaraj is obtained?

I would certainly like a prolonged and perhaps well-deserved holiday.

10. When swaraj is attained, how are the political and religious interests of Mussulmans to be safeguarded?

They will not need any safeguarding, because every Indian will be as free as every other Indian, and because there will then be mutual toleration, respect and love, and therefore mutual trust.

11. Do you honestly believe that Government will pack up and beat a hasty retreat from India on the 31st of October 1921 or at any other time within this year that you will be pleased to fix?

The Government is the system, and I do believe that it can be destroyed even before the 31st October, if the Hindus, the Mussulmans, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews of India *will.* I am still hoping that they will destroy it before the end of the year. But under the new system not a single Englishman who wishes to remain in India as her faithful servant need leave the country.

12. Do you not think that the Government is too weak to check your propaganda?

I certainly do, and it is becoming daily weaker.

13. Would you leave your own son undefended if (which God forbid) he was being prosecuted for murder, not for sedition?

I really believe that I have the courage to do so. I certainly had the hardihood to give that advice to many a dear friend. I have already advised a dear friend of the Andhra district to stake the whole of his valuable property by not defending a civil suit which has been brought against him from pure political malice.

14. What should your son (for example) do if some one defrauded him of some money and had made himself scarce?

My son if he is a good non-co-operator would certainly let the thief keep the money. Maulana Shaukat Ali was robbed of Rs. 600 nine months ago. He knew the person who had robbed him. He thought no more about it.

15. What was the effect of your satyagraha on the Punjab?

Sir Michael O'Dwyer would not let the message of satyagraha reach the Punjab. Some Punjabis therefore got excited; a few went mad. Sir Michael O'Dwyer became madder still and butchered innocent men by deputy. But satyagraha is a powerful tonic, and now the Punjab is as lively as any other province of India, and is showing in spite of her mercurial population a degree of self-restraint that is worthy of emulation by the rest of the provinces.

16. Do you really believe that non-co-operation can remain non-violent?

Certainly. The wonderful restraint shown by the people over the arrests in Sind, Karnatak and East Bengal is proof of it.

17. How do the forcible conversions of Hindus and pillage of Hindu homes reflect upon the unity of Hindus and Mohammedans in India?

They have put a severe strain upon Hindu patience, but it has stood the strain and its survival proves that the unity is based on knowledge. No Mussulman approves of the Moplah fanaticism.

18. What is the actual cause of this rupture of Hindu-Muslim unity in Malabar?

There is no rupture of the unity in the disturbed area. The Moplahs could not at any time have considered Hindus as their brethren. The causes of the violence are that as in the Punjab in 1919, so in Malabar now the message of non-co-operation was only vaguely delivered when its progress was arrested by the authorities. The Moplahs were never particularly friendly to the Malabar Hindus. They had looted them before. Their notions of Islam were of a very crude type. They were kept in utter darkness by the Government and neglected both by Mussulmans and Hindus. Being wild and brave but ignorant, they have mistaken the mission of the Khilafat and acted in a savage, inhuman and irreligious manner. It is quite improper to judge Islam or the Mussulmans of the rest of India by the present conduct of the Moplahs.

19. Can you say what made you to couple the Khilafat with the Punjab wrongs?

The Khilafat wrong was born before the Punjab wrong, and I made it my own in the year 1918 at the Delhi War Conference (*vide* my open letter to the Viceroy)[1]. Non-co-operation was conceived at Delhi in 1919 before the Punjab wrong had taken definite shape. The latter was tacked to the Khilafat, when it became clear that it required as drastic a remedy as the Khilafat.

20. Can you say why the Mohammedans of India are so demonstrative for the Khilafat, when the Mohammedans of other Islamic countries do not seem to care for it?

I do not know that non-Indian Mussulmans do not care for the Khilafat, but if they do not and the Indian Mussulmans do, for me it is proof enough that the latter have developed greater religious consciousness than the former.

21. Since the Sultan of Turkey has failed to defend the Muslim holy places, has he any right now to be considered a Khalifa?

This is hardly a question for a Hindu to answer. But if I may venture a reply, the Khilafat rests in the Turks by right of valiant defence for hundreds of years. The Sultan may have failed, the Turks have not. The Khilafat agitation does not centre round an individual but round an idea, which is at once temporal, spiritual and political. If the Turks cannot defend, if the Mussulmans of the world do not by their power of opinion and active sympathy stand by the Turks, both they and the latter will suffer irretrievably. Such an event will be a calamity for the world, for I believe that Islam has its place in the world as much as Chris-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIV, p. 379.

tianity and every other religion. Chivalry demands the support of the Turks in the hour of their need.

22. Is the economic law that man must buy in the best and the cheapest market wrong?

It is one of the most inhuman among the maxims laid down by modern economists. Nor do we always regulate human relations by any such sordid considerations. An Englishman pays more (and rightly) for the English collier in preference to cheap (say) Italian labour. Any attempt to introduce cheap labour into England will lead to a revolution. It would be sinful for me to dismiss a highly paid faithful servant because I can get a more efficient and cheaper servant although the latter may be equally faithful. The economics that disregard moral and sentimental considerations are like wax-works that being life-like still lack the life of the living flesh. At every crucial moment these new-fangled economic laws have broken down in practice. And nations or individuals who accept them as guiding maxims must perish. There is something noble in the self-denial of the Mussulman who will pay more for food religiously prepared or a Hindu who will decline to take food unless it is ceremonially clean. We lost when we began to buy our clothing in the cheap markets of England and Japan. We will live again, when we appreciate the religious necessity of buying our clothes prepared by our own neighbours in their cottages.

23. Is picketing non-violent?

It certainly has been non-violent in the vast majority of cases. It was the easiest thing to resort to violence in picketing, but the volunteers all over have exercised great restraint.

24. Do you explain the beauty (spiritual or otherwise) of bonfires, when many people are going half-naked in the country and are shivering at the thought of the coming winter?

I do; for I know that their half-nakedness is due to our criminal neglect of the fundamental law of life in India that she should wear only hand-spun just as she must eat only home-cooked food. My giving my discarded foreign clothes to them will only prolong the agony. But the warmth generated by the bonfires will last for the coming winter, and if the bonfires are kept up till the last piece is burnt, the warmth will last for ever, and each successive winter will see the nation more and more invigorated.

Young India, 27-10-1921

154. UNTOUCHABILITY IN HINDU SHASTRAS

I gladly publish the fore-going[1] so that the readers of *Young India* may have the other side. Mr. Aiyar is a learned *vakil*, and one would have expected of him better knowledge of my position than he betrays in his letter. I laid emphasis in all my speeches in the Madras Presidency on the unreasoning and cruel prejudice against the untouchables. Do we treat the "untouchable" *Panchamas* as we treat our mothers and sisters whilst they are untouchable? I still confess my literary ignorance of the Shastras, but I do profess to understand the secret of Hinduism. And I venture to say in all humility but with all the strength I can command, that to perpetuate untouchability in the manner we have done is a serious blot in Hinduism, an unwarranted abuse of the *Smritis* and a negation of love which is the basis of Hinduism. I therefore do not hesitate to call "untouchability" as practised today a Satanic activity. I invite Mr. Aiyar to devote the talents God has given him to the service of the outcastes among his countrymen, and I promise that he will see the meaning of life that I see in the Hindu Shastras.

Young India, 27-10-1921

155. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 27, 1921

If I have really conquered the six enemies[2] of man, the people would readily accept whatever I do or speak as born of experience. But I myself am not aware of having conquered the passions. Have I succeeded even now in overcoming the fear of serpent-bite? That I have not rid myself of it signifies my spiritual darkness.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 37

[1] R. Krishnaswamy Aiyar's letter in defence of untouchability, quoting texts from *Manusmriti* and other Shastras, published in *Young India*, 20-10-1921 and 27-10-1921; not reproduced here

[2] *Kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (covetousness), *moha* (delusion), *mada* (pride) and *matsara* (envy)

156. SPEECH ON SWADESHI, AHMEDABAD

October 29, 1921

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I do not have a single word to say now. I cannot think of one, even if I try hard. My present mental condition does not permit me to make a speech anywhere or to take part in a procession. In any case, why should I have to make speeches or take part in processions in Bombay, Ahmedabad or Gujarat?

The work should be carried on as if I was not present in Gujarat. If I have still to rouse Gujarat through my exhortations, then I must admit that we shall not get swaraj this year. The very meaning of swaraj is that Gujarat should be ready to stand on its own feet and even forget me. Young and old, all should show such fearlessness that, even if the best and the most important men fall or are imprisoned, people will remain undaunted and say that the struggle started by Gandhi is now theirs, that, if Gandhi has gone mad and lost his head, they will not follow his example. When we have this temper, it will be swaraj.

When I was invited to come here, I asked them to consult Vallabhbhai. I follow the wishes of that leader. The leader who has been shaking the whole of Gujarat knows best whether or not I should speak here. I can never do anything in disregard of his wishes. I can offer him advice and make suggestions, but I cannot do anything against his wishes. Not to trust anyone, in the first instance, is a sign of wisdom. But having trusted a person, one must trust one's head to his judgment. It will not then do to find fault with him over every little matter.

What else may I tell you today? Whatever I had to say I have told you already. I like to light an oven. If I am asked to apply the match-stick to any oven, I would do it only too readily. I am a believer in non-violence. There is non-violence and love in every fibre of my being. I have no desire to harm anyone; I have never wished ill to anybody; I have never thought of killing anyone. Though a believer in non-violence, I love to consign foreign cloth to fire because, in burning foreign cloth, we commit no sin but only effect self-purification. We commit sin even when we bathe, eat or cook. Likewise, we may be committing sin when we burn foreign cloth, but today we have no choice but to do so. We cannot live without breathing or

drinking water or cooking; we know these things to be essential and do them all, though we know that we commit sin while doing them. The Hindus even aspire to escape from the encumbrance of this body, but do not commit suicide for that purpose.

Today we have no other way to break the chains of slavery. We would, if we could, break them speedily without adopting swadeshi. But how can that be? In this very capital of Gujarat, women, and some men, have the courage to join processions and attend meetings dressed in garments made of foreign yarn. As long as this is so, how can we hope to break the chains? Even mill-cloth is meant not for us but for the very poor. If we reserve this cloth for us and offer khadi to the poor, the latter will ask, "Why don't you yourselves wear khadi? You give us coarse khadi while you cannot do without fine muslin, *jagannathi* and calico." I have already said that one who wishes to serve the poor should give up all adornment. An atmosphere will then have been created in which the poor will not be able to plead in this manner and will not ask for mill-cloth. They will feel ashamed and tell you that they, too, should be given the khadi which you wear.

But thousands of men and women in Ahmedabad still wear garments of foreign cloth. The women, moreover, entertain all manner of fancies, that it is inauspicious to burn clothes which they have been wearing all these days. How can burning dirt be inauspicious? How can we cling to our filth? This way of arguing is wholly the result of viewing one's duty upside down. When we do not preserve our rotting corn, how can we preserve foreign cloth which is the sign of our slavery?

Now we do not have even two full months. The Congress will be meeting on December 25. If we do not have the flag of swaraj unfurled by that time, what will be the use of having convened the Congress? How can we accomplish this? I told Vallabhbhai that there is a reason why Chitta Ranjan Das has not sent a telegram accepting the presidentship of the Congress. He is trying to make Bengal feel ashamed. He has been saying to Bengal : "You are sending me right to the western end of India; what account shall I give there? I do not want to bring shame on Bengal. What is the reason that the whole of India has chosen a Bengali for the Congress presidentship? People elsewhere think so well of Bengal that they believe it must have something to show." This is how Deshbandhu Das has been appealing to Bengal. His sending a telegram depends on the people's response.

Just as the Ali Brothers could at the last moment attend the Amritsar Congress, if in like manner we cannot welcome here at

the Ahmedabad Congress non-co-operators like the Ali Brothers, Maulana Mujadid and those others who are about to be sent to jail, or have already been jailed, what is the point in holding the Congress at all?

As I said in Bombay, this bonfire is good if it is a symbol of the fire which has been raging in our hearts. What shall we gain if we merely enjoy lighting this bonfire just as children enjoy firing crackers? If that is all there is in it, this bonfire is a meaningless blaze, mere mischief. If, however, it was a sign of the fire in our heart, I would ask whether the women present here would have dared to come dressed in garments of foreign or mill-made cloth.

When the women wear whatever khadi, coarse or fine, is available, just as they eat bread made at home, whether thick or thin, and then question me why Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali have not been released, why other fighters are not being released, why we do not get swaraj, I will say that I had miscalculated, that there was nothing left in swadeshi now and, therefore, would suggest something different to them. Today, however neither India nor Gujarat nor Ahmedabad is in a position to ask me this question.

It is true that there has been a great deal of awakening in us and that the use of khadi has increased; however, if I am asked how many people there are in Ahmedabad who have burnt all their clothes, I would say that I do not know, but that there may not be more than ten or twelve such persons. About a thousand women in Ahmedabad have started wearing khadi, but how can this suffice? Of what account are a thousand women in the whole of Gujarat? How many men and women in Gujarat ply the spinning-wheel in their free time?

Dr. Ray writes to say that all the men and women in his factory have started plying the spinning-wheel. And he adds that he has not seen in any machine the magic which he has glimpsed in the spinning-wheel. Have the men and women in Ahmedabad done so much for swaraj that they can ask me questions about it?

Swadeshi is beneficial to crores. It is a sign of a union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims, of compassion towards the poor. We should never think of burning down Government buildings or of engaging in violence when leaders are arrested. If they want to arrest me at this meeting, there should be such an atmosphere that even a peon can fearlessly take me away in the presence of you all. At that time, no one should shed tears; rather, there should be a brighter glow on the faces of all and everyone should think that now swaraj has been won.

When I am arrested, everyone should discard all his garments of foreign cloth. Women should leave here as many of their garments as they can consistently with their modesty and discard others when they reach home. Just as, after their periods, women bathe in order to cleanse themselves, so polluted by foreign cloth, they should take a bath and resolve not to wear it in future.

Staying in Gujarat, I go from place to place and address my appeals to people. My own desire is, if there is any taluka where swadeshi is being completely followed and where men and women are ready to go to jail or even to mount the gallows, to go and work from there. The conditions on which I may be invited have already been given in *Navajivan*, but I recount them here again :

1. Complete swadeshi should be followed.
2. Contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis* should be shed and they should be looked upon as our blood-brothers.
3. Hindus and Muslims should regard one another as blood-brothers.
4. Everyone should realize that there is no other means as effective as peace for winning swaraj.

If we are able to do something, it is because we have learnt to remain peaceful and acquired courage. It is because we did not lose our heads when the Ali Brothers were arrested that the latter could play with the court as they liked. Had we lost our senses, they could not have done this. If, now, the Government says that it will not tolerate their conduct, the Ali Brothers will ask the Government to quit. The court has seen this fearlessness of the Brothers and, therefore, it says nothing. If we lose our heads, the Government will lose its.

There are three essential conditions for winning swaraj:

1. We should preserve peace and see that others too do so.
2. We should relieve the sufferings of the poor.
3. As Hindu-Muslim unity is still a tender plant, it should be nursed carefully.

How can Hindus and Muslims afford to be angry with one another? I get many letters about Malabar. One of the correspondents says that "there is no union of hearts between Hindus and Muslims". I am convinced that this reflects only the writer's belief. The hearts of both Hindus and Muslims are soft. Muslims should not believe that they and the Hindus are the only parties concerned. There is also a third, God, between them. Why should not the Hindus, too, believe that the Muslims will not kill those who love God? Only if they are complete hypocrites will they kill such persons. At present, however, neither the Hindus nor

the Muslims give up hypocrisy, and yet both talk about winning swaraj, of saving the Khilafat and protecting the cow. If the Hindus wish to protect the cow, they should leave the matter to the goodwill of the Muslims. Then God will certainly come and reside in the hearts of Muslims and protect the cow. Islam does not forbid killing of cows, but it is the Muslims' duty to refrain from doing anything that may hurt their neighbours' sentiments. The Hindus and the Muslims will not be able to win swaraj with timid hearts; they will be able to do so only if they are clean in their heart, and then they will also be able to save the Khilafat and protect the cow.

Even if only one taluka of Gujarat shows such heroism, it will win swaraj for itself and secure it for others. Let the bonfire that we are lighting today generate such strength in us that we do not rest till we have reached our goal.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

157. HOW STRONG?

How strong the municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are should be known in a few days. All the three have rejected Government control over their education departments and have been growing from strength to strength till this day. It is said that now the Government has decided to test them. Its note is in the nature of a threat [to the municipalities] and incitement to ratepayers. It says that those who supported the resolution to free education [from Government control] have rendered themselves liable to prosecution by any ratepayer. We know the motive behind this suggestion. The Government's second step now is likely to be to get some ratepayer to sue one of the councillors. I trust that the Government will find no ratepayer to sue a councillor who has acted out of a sense of duty and I also trust that, if any such ratepayer comes forward, the councillor will remain fearless. If we do not develop the strength to brave such risks, how can we claim to be fit for swaraj?

Another thing the Government can do is to suspend the municipalities and to carry on the administration of the cities itself by appointing committees. This is the utmost it can do. If it does that, I see in the situation the possibility of our winning swaraj. If the Government acts in this manner and if we are ready, we

shall get the battle we wanted; how can a battle coming thus unexpectedly fail to please a warrior?

As a drowning man clutches at a straw, the Government catches hold of whatever comes to hand and sinks the deeper. Are we ready?

If the residents of the three cities are ready, the Government is bound to beat a retreat. It will certainly be ridiculous of the Government to get someone to file a suit. The second step is to supersede the municipalities. It is a step which should be welcomed. So long as the municipalities are not superseded, power will remain in the hands of the councillors themselves. When they are superseded, power will certainly not pass into the Government's hands but it will be in the hands of the people. This is the meaning of civic power. The power which the councillors have has been given to them by the citizens, not by the Government.

As long as the citizens had not awakened, they counted for little with the officials and the councillors. They could make the former dance as they pleased. Now times have changed. The citizens have ceased to be puppets, they have become, or should become, actors in a drama. The Government, therefore, will not have a picnic after suspending the municipalities.

Do the citizens have this degree of awakening among them? Are the councillors really and in truth the voice of the citizens? This will be known now. The councillors should explain the Government note fully to the citizens and make them understand their duty. Only three things are to be pointed out :

1. If the Government starts its own schools, we should not send our children to them.

2. If the Government, having suspended the municipalities, wishes to take civil administration into its own hands, the citizens should not pay rates. Let the Government get money from outside and clean the latrines.

3. If the Government takes over control, we should take the civic administration in our hands.

Ours is a fight with truth as a weapon, so that neither will the Government succeed if it resorts to fraud nor we if we are guilty of hypocrisy. If the citizens have really acquired consciousness, no one can deprive them of it. If they have not, the councillors cannot create it. If, therefore, we explain to the people every step of the Government and consult them in our march forward, we shall discover, and also show to the Government, that it has no strength at all. The Government's strength lies in our weakness. If we acquire strength, we ourselves shall be the government; and

our acquiring strength means the mental, emotional, social and political education of the two and a half lakh people of Ahmedabad, the thirty-five thousand people of Nadiad and the one lakh people of Surat. They should know with their minds whom to trust and, through their hearts, that happiness can only follow suffering; should know with their minds and their hearts that, just as our dealings in the family should be pure, so also must our social conduct be pure; this means that, as our homes should be clean, so our streets and our towns should be clean; as the home should be free from strife, so should society be free from it and, as we would be ready to lay down our lives for the family, so should we be ready to lay it down for society; they should know, as following from all this, that, if the relationship between the king and his subjects becomes vitiated, that is, becomes a relationship between the privileged and the unprivileged, between the employer and the employee, or between master and slave, we should have no more to do with that king, with that system of government. From this, we can deduce rules to guide our conduct in all matters.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-10-1921

158. UNDERSTANDING AS DISTINCT FROM LITERACY

My plight is beyond description. A *Garasia*[1] friend of the *Gohel* class wrote a letter to me on 12th April, which I have kept aside all these days. It was not written for publication, but discusses suggestions for action by me. It has been travelling all along with me. Every week I take it up and put it away hoping to deal with it later on. The letter is written in a beautiful and legible handwriting, but is rather long. Anyone who writes a letter of nine pages to me can hardly expect me to read and think over it. It is because I liked the opening sentences that I preserved the letter, and I have now been able to read the whole of it.

I should like this gentleman and others who may write to me to understand my position. They should bear in mind that, as a rule, one who expresses all his ideas in a clear hand on a single page will receive an early reply. If the best of ideas have been expressed in a single sentence; why cannot we state in one sentence what we want? As we go ahead with our work, we shall realize

[1] Name of a community in Gujarat and Saurashtra

that we can carry on public work with the fewest words. I have nowhere come across such compressed language as the "military" language of the British. I have seen orders being given in a single word. Even words are abbreviated. There are strong reasons for this. Where action is required, the maze of words is cut down to a minimum. It would be almost a crime to speak of a commanding officer. He is referred to in correspondence merely as C.O.

In other words, where there is understanding, letters, i.e., knowledge of the letters is not very necessary. Would he, who has truly understood what *moksha*[1] means and realized the *atman*, read the Vedas? What would one whose stomach is full do with *basudi*?[2] Of what use is a book showing the way to the Himalayas to one who has already seen them? It is for this reason that I had written with reference to *Garasias*, *Kathis*[3] and others that it was understanding more than literacy which they needed for improvement in their conditions.

That prompted this same *Garasia* friend to write to me : "If you think that understanding is more important than literacy, you are the right person to awaken it in us. We are addicted to drink and opium and are given to idling away our time. Barring this, we suffer from no such caste-intrigues as trouble other communities. You want people to have greater strength for self-defence. Actually, we have this as part of our inheritance. If we realize what we are, we can once again become true servants of the country —we aspire to be so. Tell us how we may become this." This is the substance of the letter.

My task has become simpler as I am replying to this question after six months because, during this period, I have written a great deal and, if this has been read with understanding, I need not add a single word. Moreover, if anyone reads all my writings at a stretch, I am sure he could make the following criticism. "This man has said the same thing day in and day out. He must have become the editor of *Navajivan* for doing this." The criticism would be justified. I have burdened myself with *Navajivan* in order to go on repeating the same truth.

I, who was born in the land of the *Mers* and the *Vaghers* in Kathiawar, know their virtues and vices, and of *Kathis* too. If, apart from others, they alone become true to themselves, they could

[1] Liberation from phenomenal existence as the supreme end of life

[2] A preparation of boiled milk

[3] A community in Saurashtra

rouse Saurashtra and also do great service to the country as a whole. The legend goes that when Mulu Manek and Jodho Manek, after their arms had been smashed, used their feet to fire their guns and went on fighting, and all for a trifle, their courage knew no bounds. If, however, they are sung in songs even today, it is not because they could aim straight but because they had the strength to hold out against a big force and could carry death in their pockets, so to say. There was only one battle of Thermopylae in Greece, but I fancy that in Barda[1] there have been many such battles.

I expect only one thing of the *Kathi* Rajputs. Your forefathers died fighting for their *garas*[2]. If you wish to be worthy of your inheritance, then, for the sake of a *garas* like India, be true Kshatriyas and get ready to lay down your own lives, giving up all thought of killing others. Killing is not the dharma of the Kshatriya. The Kshatriya who kills anyone weaker than himself is not a Kshatriya but a murderer; one who stands up against a strong man in order to protect the weak and kills him is forgiven his violent action; but the true Kshatriya is he who, not killing even a strong man, dies defending the weak. His dharma is to die, and not to run away. It is not his dharma to inspire fear of death in others; it is to be rid of this fear himself. This explains why he is ready to defend others. One who would do this needs to shed the fear of death more than he needs to learn wrestling. What should an unarmed *Kathi* youth do against a giant who is armed from head to foot and protected by armour? Will he let a poor girl fall into the latter's hands or will he lay down his life before the giant, trusting the girl to God's protection, and thus teach her too a lesson in unarmed courage? Why did Sita rest her eyes on two boys in saffron robes, ignoring other giant-like men? She had felt Rama's soul-force. That innocent girl was unaware as yet that he had the strength to lift Shiva's bow.

But who can give the kind of protection which Rama could? One who is a *brahmachari*, who has conquered sleep and eats little, one who is free from vices and is truthful, one who speaks little, who suffers because he thinks of others' sufferings and refuses to keep with himself anything beyond his immediate needs since he would not have what is denied to others. Some persons will have to have hearts as large as the sea for such compassion. I admit that Rajputs, if they decide, can be ready for this earlier than others.

[1] In Saurashtra

[2] Share in State lands as inheritance

Today, however, there is in the country only one class of people, a new one, —that of slaves.

As long as India is in bondage, a true Kshatriya can neither sleep nor rest in peace nor enjoy wearing good clothes. Anyone who wants to be such a Kshatriya can become one. People of all the four castes and all religions should become Kshatriya enough to protect themselves. Kshatriyas take upon themselves the sufferings of others and also protect them. All of us cannot become Kshatriyas; some will remain weak. This movement of ours is for drawing up a census of Kshatriyas. The day for presenting our accounts is at hand. But one who cannot use the spinning-wheel cannot become a Kshatriya capable of freeing India in this age.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

159. MY NOTES

MESSAGE TO THE "DHEDS"

A leaflet in Gujarati under this heading has been distributed by the Government among our *Dhed* brothers. The leaflet says that a rumour is current to the effect that the houses of those *Dheds* who do not join non-co-operation will be burnt down and that the Government will not protect them. The message states that these rumours are false, and that "measures are being taken for the progress of all sections of the people, without any distinctions".

If anyone has threatened our *Dhed* brothers or burnt the house of any of them, then he cannot be called a non-co-operator, or a Hindu or even an Indian. I simply cannot believe that such a threat has been held out by anyone. If it has been held out, however, what protection can the Government offer the *Dhed* brothers? What protection has it given in the past? How has the Government been able to protect *Dheds* when rude Hindus abuse them in trains? What protection does it give to those who, on their identity being discovered in offices, are harassed by the officers themselves, and to those who are without wells, houses and schools? I should indeed like to know what the Government has done to improve their condition.

Yes, the Government has certainly done one thing. There is no doubt that it has got much forced work out of them, taught some of them to eat beef and encouraged them in their vices. Their moral condition has not been improved one bit. Permi-

ssion has, of course, now been given for a meeting of theirs to be held in the Town Hall. The meeting is for honouring the Prince. This serves the Government's own interest. So far as I know, this is the first time that a meeting of *Antyajas* is to take place in the Town Hall in Bombay. This is nothing but flattery or bribing. Moreover, the Government will readily welcome anyone who may want to join in honouring the Prince. By acting thus, it is insulting the innocent Prince of Wales and using him to serve its own interest. If the poor man knew how he is to be honoured, it is doubtful whether he would come to India at this time; if, nevertheless, he did come, it would speak no end for the British people's sense of discipline. At the call of duty, both the King and his subjects would be ready to make any sacrifices. If the sacrifice was not for base self-interest those who made them would be fit for *moksha*.

But my purpose is more to point out to the Hindus their duty than to dwell on the shortcomings of the Government or of the British. It is because the Hindus have not understood their dharma that we see attempts being made to lure our *Dhed* brothers with inducements. I visualize endless occasions of quarrelling in these attempts to drag them to opposite sides. Hence these two developments, the Government's message and the Town Hall meeting, hold a lesson both for the *Antyajas* and the others. The former should not allow themselves to be deceived by the message or the meeting in the Town Hall. Let them fight the Hindus in a civilized way for what they consider their rights, respect the rules of Hindu society, give up eating meat, etc., especially beef, clean themselves physically after doing sanitary work, give up dissoluteness and so clean their hearts as well. Other Hindus should show regard for the *Antyajas*, admit them in Congress committees, understand their hardships, defend them if they are molested by anyone, look upon them as their own brothers and get rid of the notion that contact with them is sinful.

However, a thoughtful and considerate Hindu told me in the course of a conversation that, according to the Hindu religion, touch, even the vibrations emanating from *prana*[1], have an effect on the other person and it is, therefore, considered advisable that one should stay away from such people. He added : "It is because the Hindus knew about such intangible effects and guarded themselves against them that they have survived for thousands of years and have been able to compose wonderful Shastras."

[1] Life-force

Stated thus, the idea is true. Contact with dirt—association with the wicked—defiles us while the company of the good cleanses us. But all this is not said in the Shastras to foster contempt or teach exclusiveness. It is said to persuade people to live in solitude and exercise self-control, and refers not to contact with *Antyajas* but to contact with all human beings. We have to purify ourselves inwardly and we can do this better by serving our *Antyaja* brothers and improving their lot. We put our hands even into gutters in order to clean them, and are none the worse for contact with their contents. If, moreover, we always think of others' evils and keep away from everyone, we should become utter hypocrites because, when we dwell on others' evils, we regard ourselves as so perfect that we think we have nothing to set right. In other words, we become the lowest of the low. The *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* are within ourselves. We need to rid ourselves of them, take a bath on coming into contact with them. Many of the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* outside of us, though engaged in sanitary work, are so simple, so good and upright that they deserve reverence. The *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have no monopoly of vice nor have the other communities of virtue. We should, therefore, take care lest, failing to understand the meaning of certain statements in the Hindu Shastras and some of their ideas, we stick to their letter and fall.

SWADESHI AND "BRAHMACHARYA"

A friend writes to say that while swadeshi is gathering momentum in the country, there is no advance in regard to *brahmacharya.* How will swaraj be achieved so long as men and women do not hold their minds under control? This seems a fine idea, but there is no necessary relation between the two things. Swadeshi and *brahmacharya* are two distinct matters. Khadi is sacred as compared to foreign cloth. The wheat from Charotar is sacred as compared to American wheat. But just as one who eats wheat from Charotar may yet be wicked and sensual, so may also be a person who wears khadi. Therefore, by attributing greater sanctity to khadi or swadeshi we shall only be harming ourselves. It would not be possible to propagate swadeshi at all if khadi dress came to be regarded as the means to perfection. The good and the wicked, the healthy and the sick, the righteous and the sinful—all should purify themselves at least to the extent of adopting khadi. There is patriotism in it, and it comprehends the duty of compassion and friendship towards one's countrymen and one's neighbours. Hence I regard wearing of khadi also as a form of self-purification. If crores of people achieve even this little measure of

self-purification, the sum total of the merit earned thereby would be so high that we would regain that birthright of ours which we have lost. At present, we are striving for government by ourselves, whether perfect or imperfect. For this, swadeshi is essential and sufficient.

Only a few will observe *brahmacharya*, though we wish that all should. If everyone observed it, we would gain the kingdom both of this world and the other. It is part of our dharma to observe it but, by linking it up with swadeshi, we make the latter, which is easy to follow, as difficult as *brahmacharya*.

Having thus seen and explained the difference between the two, I would certainly add that every worker whether man or woman, should observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. We, workers, are so few in number and, on reflection we shall find that we are so poor, too, that we have neither the time for begetting children nor the means of bringing them up. Who would benefit by children being born to a diseased person? What an immoral thing it would be for a consumptive to beget children? If this is so, what are we to say about slaves? The great tragedy is that, while thinking of the gratification of our desires, we do not think at all about the offspring. We are such slaves to our desires that we have lost all good sense. The birth of children is the accidental result of our indulgence, and not the desired, worthy and sacred fruit of a man of self-control having done his duty as a householder to limited extent only. Very often it is an unwanted and painful fruit.

I am certain that those dedicated persons at any rate who are engrossed in the service of the people cannot possibly desire sex-pleasure. How can they spare time for it, either? It is in the hope that there will be no such person that I am making my modest offering to this *swaraj-yajna*. If the ultimate aim is merely to get power transferred to the people, I am sure I am not so childish as to spend myself in meaningless efforts to secure this toy. I indeed believe that those who accept even this outward freedom as their goal for the present and work for it will realize that they will not achieve it till they become truthful, compassionate, brave and fearless, adopt simplicity in their lives and follow swadeshi. While making this effort, some at least cannot escape laying their hands on the *ratnachintamani*[1]. I have joined this effort and am ever unperturbed because I know that it will raise the moral level of the nation, and I certainly wish, therefore, that volunteers, both

[1] A fabulous jewel supposed to have the virtue of fulfilling a wish instantly

men and women, will take a pledge to observe *brahmacharya* till we have won swaraj. They should not cheat themselves when taking it, should not take it at my asking. They will be able to keep the pledge and it will bear fruit only if it is taken with understanding and determination . . . .

The Names Rama and Rahim

Writing to me, a Sikh gentleman says that swadeshi is all right, but I who believe in God, why do I not put the name of God before all else? Why do I not ask everyone to pray, repeating the name by which he knows God, Khuda, *Ishwar* or Rama, whichever it may be? It is true that I do not do this. I am certain that one cannot attain heaven through mere repetition of words. One must be fit for such repetition. I believe that, so long as we wear foreign cloth, we are not fit to take the name *Ishwar* or Allah. A man who cuts another's throat with Rama's name on his lips profanes that name. Likewise, the Indian who, refusing to use the cloth woven by the hands of another Indian, gets his requirements from hundreds of miles away and so cuts the throat of his brother, too is not fit to take the name of God. In this connection, I have already pointed out the importance of the spinning-wheel. Spinning is such restful work that, as we make the hand one with the yarn, we can attune our hearts to God. Devotion to God, like *brahmacharya*, cannot be linked with swadeshi. Even a person whose lips do not utter God's name would, if he follows swadeshi, gain to that extent. Even an atheist following swadeshi would benefit himself and the country thereby. One who has God ever in his mind and heart will of course do much good to himself and the country. Swadeshi is the power which takes us towards God, as it raises us higher. I have written all this about the suggestion of this friend in order to make it clear that, if we do not worship God, we cannot look upon our struggle as a holy one. We who are fighting to defend our dharma should certainly not forsake God's name, should ever keep repeating it in the depth of our hearts. We should repeat it with each heart-beat, that is, unceasingly. Swadeshi helps us to do this, but the two ideas do not mean the same thing. While swadeshi is the dharma attaching to the body, chanting the name of God is a property of the *atman*.

"People's Fair"

"People's Fair" means a fair for the people. Two Parsi sisters write to me to say that a people's fair is to be held at the time

of the Prince of Wales's visit and some persons believe that people could attend it. They say that they can understand the idea of not joining in honouring the Prince, but why should one not attend fairs, fireworks, etc., of which the municipality will bear the cost? This argument is not correct for, if expenditure is the only thing to be taken into consideration, the Prince will be honoured at our cost. The money which the Government spends is ours. Our argument is that we should not attend a function in arranging which we have had no voice, even if the expenses are met with our money. If a robber held a feast at our expense, would we attend it? Even so, I can see no difference between a party for honouring the Prince and a function for celebrating his visit. If we should keep away from one, we should keep away from both.

Intelligence and the Spinning-wheel

I have been receiving numerous criticisms on a statement made by the Poet in his article[1]. It is to the effect that the spinning-wheel will curb the mind of the man who plies it. I do not wish to publish the criticisms since the Poet's statement is merely an inference. Millions of spinning-wheels are in use in the country today. I know that among the people who ply the wheel are lawyers, doctors and philosophers from all provinces. Suffice it to say that the evidence of their experience is against the Poet's inference. I have questioned hundreds of students and they have not found the spinning-wheel to be an enemy of intelligence. The experience of doctors and lawyers is similar. A well-known novelist of Bengal once came to see me merely to tell me his experience. He said that he plied the spinning-wheel regularly and that, in consequence, his art had improved. I do not wish to read too much into all this. I only wish to show that the intelligence of the intelligent is sharpened by body labour of any kind and, if the work is beneficial to the people, it becomes sanctified. Spinning, being clean, light and pleasant work is the best form of such body labour and is, in the present plight of the country, the wish-fulfilling tree of heaven for us.

"Appeal to Ismaili Firka Jamat"

Writing under this heading, Mr. Fidahussain Daudbhai Poonawala says that all Muslims, Khojas, Bohras and others owe it as duty to give the fullest co-operation in swadeshi; if they do not,

1 "The Call of Truth" by Rabindranath Tagore in the October issue of *The Modern Review*, Calcutta

they will have to suffer in future. This is my belief too. Those who do not adopt swadeshi fully will certainly be left behind. The appeal is a long one. I have only mentioned the central idea. I have not considered it necessary to publish the whole of it as the other arguments advanced in it are well-known.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-10-1921

160. LETTER TO MIAN MOHAMMED HAJI JAN MOHAMMED CHOTANI

October 31, 1921

DEAR CHOTANI MIAN,

I thank you for your letter offering one lakh spinning-wheels. I am sure that the fact of your very liberal donation will strike the imagination of India and particularly the Mussulmans. In forwarding your letter to the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee I shall ask the Secretaries to bear in mind your desire that the members of the Maiman Community should receive preference. I do not know whether you have fixed any particular sum in your own mind that you wish to devote for the purpose, for experience teaches me that a cheap spinning-wheel in time becomes an expensive wheel. A good wheel, substantial and heavy, will not cost less than six rupees. If, therefore, you do not want to make so large a donation I would suggest your reducing the number of charkhas. And I would also suggest you not using the whole of the amount you may wish to devote so much for spinning as for paying a somewhat higher rate to the poor women for the yarn that they might spin and for engaging a special staff for doing the work. This will enable you to use your donation practically under your supervision and in the most economical manner as is being done in Kathiawar. Of course, I venture to send you these observations for your guidance. The merit of your act is in no way affected by them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7649

161. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

New Year's Day,[1] *Silence Day* [*October 31, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

New Year's Day and Silence Day—this is a happy coincidence for me. My vow of spinning begins from today—to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and forgo the meal in case I fail to do so. This is not a very great thing, but, thanks to the vow, my spinning will now be somewhat regular. The vow is not binding when I am in a train.

I have received your letter of Diwali greetings and the *bhajans*. Why did you write these? Your duty was to leave your [sick-] bed early. How can you wake up Durga, or for the matter of that anybody else, for this work? I received your telegrams too. One of them has the phrase "Emblezon University" which none of us here could understand. Vijayaraghavachari is not a cunning man, nor is he a *rishi*. He may have dropped "not" through oversight; but why did he not correct himself in reply to my strong wire to him?

My blessings to you both—may you enjoy health of body, mind and heart during the new year.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11423

162. CABLE TO PARSI RUSTOMJI

November 1, 1921

PARSI RUSTOMJI[2]
DURBAN

POWER POSTED TRUST REQUIRES MODIFICATION. AUTHORIZE USE FORTY THOUSAND WEAVING SCHOOL AND SEND MORE.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7725

[1] The first day of the month of *Kartika* according to the Vikram era

[2] Indian merchant of Natal; took prominent part in Gandhiji's satyagraha campaigns in South Africa

163. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 1, 1921

It is dawn. Your letter is lying before me. Why should you apologize for what you wrote?

There may be an element of egoism in my article or conduct without my being aware of it. The word *klesha* [anguish] here should be interpreted in a different way, though I cannot say how. I feel pain when I see others suffer. It is the nature of compassion that whenever one is unable to relieve the suffering of others one suffers unbearably. Logic will not avail when one is describing the condition of one's mind. I have given a graphic description of my feelings. It may be that these feelings were not quite pure. However, my state of mind at the time of writing the article[1] had also in it a yearning for *moksha*—my aspiration for *moksha* was by no means weak then—but the fact is that I am no more than an aspirant after *moksha*. But I am not yet fit for *moksha* in this life. My *tapascharya* is not intense enough. I can control my passions no doubt, but I have not yet become completely free from them. I can control the palate, but the tongue has not yet ceased relishing good food. He who can restrain the senses is a man of self-control; but the man whose senses have become, through constant practice, incapable of enjoying their objects has transcended self-control, has in fact attained *moksha*. I would not be tempted to give up my striving after *moksha* even for the sake of swaraj, but that does not mean that I have attained *moksha*. You will, therefore, notice many defects in my language. For me, even the effort for attaining swaraj is a part of the effort for *moksha*. Writing this [letter] to you is also a part of the same effort. If I find it a hindrance in the path of *moksha*, my pen would drop down this very moment, such is my yearning for *moksha*. Nevertheless, the mind is like a drunken monkey; mere effort is not enough for controlling it. Our [past] actions also must be coming in our way.

In my article "Optimism" I have suggested a rule of conduct, viz, that we should cease to have any dealings with a person who breaks a promise. This is the sign of a detached person. If even next year I find that the atmosphere in India is unfavour-

[1] *Vide* "Optimism", 23-10-1921.

able and still we go on harping the same tune, it would be an outrage. In that case, I must first acquire the necessary fitness. This is why silence has been considered the best speech. Whatever I may do will be, I am sure, quite natural to me, for I will say and act upon nothing but what I believe to be the truth.

But "Enjoy what you get today, who ever has seen tomorrow?" has been accepted as their motto alike by libertines and the self-controlled.

May the new year bring happiness to you.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 38-9

164. LETTER TO VALJI DESAI

ON THE TRAIN,
Wednesday [*November 2, 1921*][1]

Please ask the Press to send the proofs of *Young India* for this time only at the address of the Rajasthan Seva Sang, Ajmer. They should be posted on Wednesday evening or early morning on Thursday so that they may reach Ajmer by the morning mail.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI VALJI DESAI
YOUNG INDIA
AHMEDABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 6040. Courtesy : Valjibhai Govindji Desai

165. NOTES

HUNGER STRIKE

I cannot sufficiently warn non-co-operation prisoners against the danger of hastily embarking upon hunger strikes in their prisons. It cannot be justified as a means for removing irksome jail restrictions. For a jail is nothing if it does not impose upon us restrictions which we will not submit to in ordinary life. A hunger strike

[1] The letter bears the postmark : "Ajmer, November 3, 1921". It was written while Gandhiji was on his way to Delhi. He returned to Ajmer on Wednesday, November 11, 1921.

would be justified when inhumanity is practised, or food issued which offends one's religious sense or which is unfit for human consumption. It should be rejected when it is offered in an insulting manner. In other words it should be rejected when acceptance would prove us to be slaves of hunger.

At Last

Mr. Sengupta the leader of Chittagong and the soul of the Assam-Bengal Railway strike movement has at last got his imprisonment with eighteen others. It is not a long spell. He and his companions have got only three months' rigorous imprisonment. Mrs. Sengupta writing about her husband says he was quite happy over the prospect of being sentenced. I was told whilst in Chittagong that its citizens had nearly attained swaraj. "Nearly" is an elusive word. It may be next to completion or it may be farthest away from it, and yet "nearly" may be used for either state. But if the people of Chittagong want to attain swaraj completely, they must spin and weave all their cloth in their own homes and offer no temptation to dealers in foreign cloth. Its courts must be deserted and the Government schools must be empty. In that case the citizens may not even need civil disobedience. But they may not have that measure of strength or unanimity. Still if the majority desire swaraj, it cannot be stopped by the minority. The majority however in order to establish its authority must go through the fire of suffering, by means of civil disobedience.

Why Suffer?

Let there be no mistake about the meaning of these imprisonments. They are not courted with the object of embarrassing the Government, though as a matter of fact they do. They are courted for the sake of discipline and suffering. They are courted because we consider it to be wrong to be free under a Government we hold to be wholly bad. No stone should be left unturned by us to make the Government realize that we are in no way amenable to its control. And no government has yet tolerated such open defiance however respectful it may be. It might safely therefore be said that if we are yet outside the prison walls, the cause lies as much with us as with the Government. We are moving cautiously in our corporate capacity. We are still voluntarily obeying many of its laws. There was, for instance, nothing to prevent me from disregarding the Madras Government's order and courting arrest,[1]

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 29-9-1921, under the sub-title "Afflicted Madras".

but I avoided it. There is nothing to prevent me save my prudence or weakness from going without permission into the barracks and being arrested for trespass. I certainly believe the barracks to be the nation's property and not that of a Government which I no longer recognize as representative of the people. Thus there is an apparent inconsistency between the statement on the one hand that it is painful to remain outside the prison walls under a bad Government and this deliberate avoidance on the other hand of arrest upon grounds which are not strictly moral but largely expedient. We thus avoid imprisonment, because first, we think that the nation is not ready for complete civil revolt, secondly, we think that the atmosphere of voluntary obedience and non-violence has not been firmly established, and thirdly, we have not done any constructive corporate work to inspire self-confidence. We therefore refrain from offering civil disobedience amounting to peaceful rebellion, but court imprisonment merely in the ordinary pursuit of our programme and in defence of complete freedom of opinion and action short of revolt.

Thus it is clear that our remaining outside the jails of a bad Government has to be justified upon very exceptional grounds, and that our swaraj is attained when we are in jail or when we have bent the Government to our will. Whether therefore the Government feel embarrassed or happy over our incarceration, the only safe and honourable place for us is the prison. And if this position be accepted, it follows that when imprisonment comes to us in the ordinary discharge of our duty, we must feel happy because we feel stronger, because we pay the price of due performance of duty. And if exhibition of real strength is the best propaganda, we must believe that every imprisonment strengthens the people and thus brings swaraj nearer.

Something Striking

But friends whisper into my ears, we must do something striking when the Prince comes. Certainly not for the sake of impressing him, certainly not for the sake of demonstration. But I would use the occasion of his imposed visit for stimulating us into greater activity. That would constitute the most glorious impression upon the Prince and the world, because we would have made an impression upon ourselves. The shortest way to swaraj lies through self-impression, self-expression and self-reliance, both corporate and individual. I would certainly love the idea of filling the jails before the Prince arrives, but I see no way to it except after very vigorous swadeshi. There is great progress un-

doubtedly in that direction, but there is not revolutionary or lightning speed. Arithmetical progression will not answer, geometrical progression is absolutely necessary. It is not enough for us to be washed by the swadeshi spirit, we must be flooded with it. Then thousands of us involuntarily, as if by a common impulse, will march forward to civil disobedience. Today we are obliged very rightly to measure every step for want of confidence. Indeed, I do not even feel sure that thousands of us are ready to suffer imprisonment, or that we have so far understood the message of non-violence as never to be ruffled or goaded into violence.

WEEDING OUT

The Government of Madras is fast weeding out all tall poppies. Mr. Yakub Hasan and Dr. Varadarajulu are the latest victims. Mr. Yakub Hasan is known to everybody as an indefatigable Khilafat worker and nationalist. He has already suffered imprisonment for civil disobedience, he could not avoid if he was to prevent violence on the part of a Calicut mob. In a weak moment he allowed himself to be released before his time. He tendered a handsome apology for a weakness which anybody in Mr. Yakub Hasan's position might have been guilty of. The Government of Madras has given him an opportunity of showing the stuff of which he is made. Dr. Varadarajulu is not so well known outside the Madras Presidency, but he is locally known for his ability and industry, and respected for his self-effacing love of the country. He has been organizing a band of earnest workers and has been doing most effective swadeshi work. He has been now arrested for some speech or other of his like Mr. Yakub Hasan for his Tanjore speech. The fear of an outbreak of violence has now almost gone. People have realized, that their progress lies in remaining perfectly non-violent. Every such arrest leads to greater diminution of Government prestige and exposes it to contempt or ridicule. The ridicule and the contempt poured upon it by non-co-operators are not half as damaging as the ridicule and contempt invited by the Government itself by means of the arrests.

A REST CURE

And prisons have lost their terror for the people. Hardly a non-co-operator save in one or two cases has betrayed the slightest hesitation to go to gaol. On the contrary the majority have regarded it as a rest cure. Given an atmosphere of non-violence, —a prime necessity—disappearance of fear of jail and greater

acitivity by reason of imprisonments, and we have an ideal state for the establishment of swaraj.

Proof of Health

That imprisonments instead of producing demoralization act as an incentive to healthier national growth is evidenced by two letters received from accurate observers. A friend writes from Barisal:

> East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and the boycott of foreign cloth which is now complete among the masses.

Equally emphatic is the testimony from Andhradesha. The Andhra letter says:

> The real swadeshi spirit has not yet seized the hearts of the people though there is ample evidence of growing conviction in favour of the movement. In many places the required khadi is not available. The weavers are not yet quite willing to weave the swadeshi yarn, and for those that are willing there is not adequate supply of yarn. . . . One thing that seems to accelerate the progress is the policy of repression adopted by the Government. Many a sleepy hollow has been roused to activity by the arrest and imprisonment of someone or other of the Congress workers, and if these arrests and imprisonments are made on a large scale, there will undoubtedly be speedier progress in all directions. As we go on, we find apprehension of violence growing less and less.

Everyone who writes to me from Karachi testifies to the growing strength of the people side by side with their growing discipline and self-restraint and a growing adoption of swadeshi. And all this, because the distinguished prisoners are being tried in Karachi. This trial is an object-lesson to the Government and the people in non-violence coupled with courage bordering on defiance. "We have no respect for your courts" was for the first time heard at Karachi in a British-Indian court of law. What is more, the judge is powerless to deal with this open contempt of court. Why? Because the big bulky brusque Shaukat Ali who uttered the sentiment had no feeling against Kennedy the man. He showed real fellow-feeling for the man in the judge by letting him know that he loathed the system which he was blindly encouraging.

The Logical Result

The logical result of all this reasoning is that we must quickly organize ourselves for courting arrests wholesale, and that not rudely, roughly or blusteringly, certainly never violently, but peace-

fully, quietly, courteously, humbly, prayerfully and courageously. By the end of December every worker must find himself in jail unless he is specially required in the interest of the struggle not to make the attempt. Let it be remembered, that in civil disobedience we precipitate arrests and therefore may keep few outside the attempt.

Requisite Conditions

Those only can take up civil disobedience, who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the state so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion, and are prepared equally willingly to suffer the penalty of civil disobedience. Disobedience to be civil has to be absolutely non-violent, the underlying principle being the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i.e., love.

For the purpose of the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, civil resisters must implicitly believe in the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity based not upon expediency but upon real affection. Civil resisters must believe in swadeshi and therefore use only hand-spun. Humanly speaking, if not even one out of the two hundred and fifty districts of India is thus ready, I consider the attainment of swaraj during this year nearly impossible. If one district can be found where ninety per cent of the population have completely boycotted foreign cloth and are manufacturing all the cloth required by them by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, if the whole of the population of that district, whether Hindu, Mussulman, Parsi, Sikh, Christian or Jewish, is living in perfect amity, if the whole of its Hindu population is purged of the sin of untouchability and if at least one in every ten of its inhabitants is capable of suffering imprisonment or even mounting the gallows, and if while that district is civilly, peacefully and honourably resisting the Government, the rest of India remains non-violent and united and prosecutes the programme of swadeshi, I hold it to be perfectly possible to establish swaraj during this year. I shall hope, that there are several such districts ready. In any case the method now to adopt is for workers to concentrate on and develop their own districts without reference to the rest. They must not invite imprisonment till they are ready, nor must they avoid it if it comes to them unsought. They should make no speeches but simply finish the swadeshi programme in a business-like manner. Where workers find no response from their districts, they must not get disheartened but should simply become expert carders, spinners and weavers. Their out-turn will be their best and whole work whilst their neighbours are thinking what to do.

Divide and Rule

A correspondent draws a moral from the arrest of Mr. Yakub Hasan in Madras, and imprisonments of Mr. Ansari in Delhi, of Pir Mujadid in Sindh and Pir Badshah Mian in Bengal, that the Government are trying to divide us, that they are bribing the Hindus into submission by leaving them mostly alone, and that by the time the Congress meets no Mussulman non-co-operator of note will be left free to attend and guide the Congress regarding its policy on questions affecting the Mussulmans. I hope that the correspondent's prognostication is not true and that the Government will not commit any such fatal mistake. I think the Government has realized that it cannot divide Hindu and Mussulman non-co-operators. If it has arrested Pir Badshah Mian, it has arrested Dr. Banerji, Nripen Babu and Babu Sengupta. If it has arrested Mr. Yakub Hasan, it has also arrested Dr. Varadarajulu. But if the Government does imprison all the noted Mussulmans, it will still further solidify the two communities and give the Hindus a unique opportunity of fighting the battle of the Khilafat single-handed. And if the Hindus have any grit in them, they will be able to force the Government by peaceful and honourable means to imprison them also.

A Welcome Donation

The reader must have seen Chhotani Mian's letter to me donating one lakh of charkhas. Chhotani Mian deserves the warmest congratulations for his generous help. I have ventured to show to him how he can utilize the sum he might have set apart for the purpose. It is not a simple matter to distribute one lakh of charkhas in a useful way. They can only be given to deserving persons. Arrangements must therefore be made to supply slivers and collect yarn.

Two Students

Messrs Mahomed Hussain and Shafique Rahman Kidwai are students of the National Muslim University. They were posted in the Andhra District by Maulana Mahomed Ali. They were there doing great work in a most unassuming manner. They have already gone to jail whilst their chief is still on his trial. The circumstances in which they went to jail are graphically described in their letter written on their way to prison, which I give below in full:

> After seeing you off at Guntakal we went to Adoni where we received a wire form Mr. Harisarvottam Rao calling us to Cuddapah because three Congress workers had been arrested there. We went there on the eleventh

October and were working with some of our Guntur friends. We held several meetings and formed Congress and Khilafat Committees. On the 21st October in a monster meeting of over six thousand people, we distributed the *fatva* and the audience reiterated the Karachi Resolution standing. We also procured 1400 signatures on the spot and collected two thousand and five hundred rupees for Angora. On the evening of the 24th all the workers were served with an order under Sec. 144, gagging us for two months. Yesterday, early in the morning, we were served with summons to appear before the court and furnish securities for good behaviour. Accordingly we went to the court and had an informal talk with the Superintendent of Police (a European) for two hours, with the permission of the Collector. The case then began and we were charged under Sec. 108 for seditious speeches and under Sec. 124-A for seducing the soldiery by distributing the *fatva* and explaining it. After two prosecuting witnesses were examined, we gave our statement and the court adjourned till four in the afternoon. Everyone was amazed to see that we were allowed to go to our place in the city without any sort of police custody. We returned to the court at four and the Magistrate asked us to furnish securities which we refused to do. The Magistrate then sentenced us to six months' simple imprisonment and said, "Gentlemen, it is a painful duty to sentence men of your stamp." He then shook hands with us. The Superintendent then embraced us and said, "I wish to work hand in hand with you for the good of the country." Even then they did not take us in custody. We went to the mosque, said our prayers and walked to the station with the people of the town and there we found a sub-inspector and two constables waiting to take us to Central Jail, Vellore. This sort of behaviour was never expected from the police as they behaved with Mr. Ramamurti and others very roughly. We are glad that we have followed in the footsteps of our loving and respected Principal Maulana Mahomed Ali and congratulate ourselves that we are the first to be imprisoned for the so-called seducing the military by distributing the *fatva* and reiterating the Karachi Resolution. We have done our duty and request you to bless us with your prayers. We are cheerful at heart and pray to God to endow us with courage and strength to undergo all rigours and hardships.

I do not know whom to congratulate most, the brave young men, the Magistrate and the police, or the Principal who has moulded the character of these young men. As for the Government which send such innocent men to prison, I can only say it is digging its own grave in a way no non-co-operator can.

Ten Precious Reasons

The Bihar Government Publicity Bureau has issued leaflets in Hindustani giving ten reasons why foreign cloth should not be

boycotted. The reader should know how the reforms are working and the public is being misled at its own expense. Here are the reasons:

1. Cloth manufactured in India is not sufficient for our needs.

2. People being used to wearing fine cloth for a long time find it heavy to wear garments made from Indian yarn.

3. Even Indian mills use foreign yarn for the fine cloth they weave.

4. If we give up foreign cloth, we shall be in the same plight we were in 1905, when owing to swadeshi agitation Indian mills sent up prices and drained our wealth. Thus mill-owners will fatten themselves on our ruin.

5. So long as foreign cloth is imported, there is competition between Indian cloth and foreign cloth, and thus the mill-owners cannot raise prices very high.

6. There are not enough mills and handlooms in India for the cloth required.

7. Hand-spinning is not profitable because it yields no more than two annas per day.

8. Handlooms produce very little; therefore much cannot be produced from them.

9. By such boycott there will be great unrest and commotion, and India's progress will be greatly arrested.

10. By the rise in the price of cloth the poor will suffer much and discontent will spread all over.

I hope that Lord Sinha[1] knows nothing of these precious reasons, but he cannot escape responsibility. I admit that it is not humanly possible for any man to *control* the details of all the departments of a big province. But that is just the reason why no self-respecting person should serve this Government. The system is designed to drain India dry and perpetuate the foreign yoke in the interest of the foreign capitalist, chiefly the Lancashire manufacturer. But for this selfishness running through every department, the circular I have translated will be an impossibility. The most natural thing that a national government will do will be to multiply handlooms and spinning-wheels, and flood the market with plenty of hand-spun. A national government will prevent

[1] Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1920-21; first Indian member of Viceroy's Executive Council

the mill-owners from unduly raising prices, a national government would take advantage of the glorious upheaval to stabilize a great cottage industry. It did not strike the author of the precious reasons, that the millions do not even now wear fine cloth, that spinning is intended for leisure hours, that millions will not need to pay anything for spinning, that they will do it themselves and that therefore hand-spun will always be comparatively cheap for them as home-cooked food is cheaper than hotel-cooked. The moral of the Government leaflet for us should be to redouble our efforts in behalf of swadeshi and lose no time in ending a system which is like a canker eating into the very vitals of the nation.

The "Kukis"

A friend has sent me a Government *communique* on my reference to the *Kukis* during my Assam tour. I am sorry, I did not see the note for many days after its publication. But even as it is, I am unable to withdraw anything I have written. My informants told me that true facts were hushed up. Who would have known anything of the diabolical acts of the Punjab Government during the martial law days but for the Congress inquiry? What did the public know of the cruelties practised by the military during the revolt of 1857 till Kaye and Malleson lifted the veil? Who knows the true facts of many an expedition undertaken to punish our neighbours from time to time? I am in a position to say, that even now the public do not know much, if anything at all, of the fiendish cruelties practised in the Punjab during the dark recruiting days. I have evidence in my possession which was submitted to the Punjab Government but which I have withheld from the public because I was not able for want of time to follow up the details that came to light. I have seen enough of denials that cannot possibly be denied in an authentic manner. I have therefore deliberately preferred the evidence of the most respectable men of Assam to the authoritative but interested statement on behalf of the Government. I am reluctantly obliged to adhere to the note on the *Kukis* contradicted by the local Government.

A *Statesman* correspondent paints the *Kukis* in the blackest colours. I do not know the tribesmen. I hold no brief for them. They may be worse than they are painted. But if I was an officer in command of a punitive expedition, I would not be guilty of the atrocities that were attributed to the expedition by my informants.

For Employees

A correspondent inquires:

> Would you advise the servants of railway companies, European firms and others who do not want their servants to subscribe to national funds or wear khadi, to resign in obedience to the Congress call?

I should have thought that such a question could not require solution at this almost the last stage in the struggle. The surprise to me is that any person can still remain in an office where he cannot follow his religion or maintain self-respect. That hundreds of clerks find it impossible to leave their offices although they are prevented from wearing the life-giving khadi or subscribing openly to a national fund, shows the depth to which we have sunk. It did not require the stern lesson of non-co-operation to learn the elements of self-respect. And yet that is just what non-co-operation has been doing all these months. I commend to every employee the example of the brave Vizagapatam medical students who would not leave their khadi dress for the sake of being able to remain in their school.[1]

Chirala-Perala

The brave people of these little places are still continuing their fight.[2] Their leader Mr. Gopala Krishnayya is in jail. But they have not lost heart. They are still in their huts. A letter before me says:

> The people have remained firm. The fact that some of the most prominent leaders in the village have been but recently prosecuted for omission to pay the municipal taxes and have cheerfully gone to jail, has made them firmer in their resolve not to go back to the village. At the present moment both the villages are strong in their determination to stick to the position they have taken up in spite of all the losses, hardships and privations which the evacuation has brought upon them. There are some poor people whose huts have fallen down and some more requiring new huts.

It is such stuff from which swaraj can be evolved. There should be no demoralization when the leaders are gone, and there should be no surrender in the face of fire.

Young India, 3-11-1921

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title "Brave Students"; also "Notes", 24-11-1921, under the sub-title "More about Medical Students".

[2] *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1921.

166. ANOTHER GURKHA CHARGE

It almost seems as if Bengal is to be the first in suffering and therefore the first in winning swaraj. The Chandpur outrage is still fresh in the memory. Now comes the news of an equally terrible outrage in Chittagong. Let Babu Prasannakumar Sen, Secretary of the District Congress Committee, tell the tale in his own words:

> I take this opportunity of giving you an account of the latest turn of events at Chittagong. Mr. Sengupta, President, and St. Mohim Chandra Das, Secretary, Chittagong District Congress Committee, and sixteen others were arrested on the 2nd July last for taking part in a procession without licence contrary to a notice previously issued by the local authorities under Sec. 30 of the Police Act. Their trial came up on the 19th October. They were charged under Sec. 151 I.P.C. and Sec. 32 of the Police Act. The accused did not offer any defence and were each sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for three months on the 20th of October. It was known in the town that the noble prisoners would be taken to the Central Jail at Alipur the same evening. People began to collect before the jail gate from 4 o'clock. Band parties, concert parties and *sankirtan* parties were also brought in. In the evening the whole town was illuminated and there was bomb firing and rocket flying. This the people did without any instructions from the Congress organization. Shortly after 8 p.m. the prisoners were taken out of jail and placed in police carriages for being conveyed to the railway station. A procession with torch light, band parties, concert parties followed the carriages in an extremely orderly manner.
>
> The procession having reached the approaches of the railway station, a *posse* of Gurkhas numbering about a hundred and armed with guns came out of ambush. Lights were put out by some person not yet known, and the Gurkhas suddenly and without any notice whatsoever sprang upon innocent and peaceful persons with all the savagery they could command with cries of *maro, maro, lagao, lagao*. . . . It is reported that nearly a hundred persons got bleeding wounds in different parts of their bodies, and about three hundred persons received aching blows. The District Magistrate, Mr. Strong, and Additional District Magistrate, Mr. Burrows, were present on the spot. One prominent Peace and Order Association man was seen taking part in the assault and crying at the top of his voice, *maro, maro*, and after the assault was over, he was seen in company with the District Magistrate. After the assault outside the station premises, a European military officer, presumably commanding the Gurkhas, entered the platform. He made

a show of proceeding to the compartment reserved for prisoners, but made a sudden left wheel and began to push people who had been there with platform tickets. No warning was given, no request was made to move away from or clear the platform. . . . Both outside and inside the platform, serious loss of life would have occurred, had not people remained calm and non-violent under great provocation. . . .

The local Congress Committee, the Chittagong Association and the local Khilafat Committee met at an extraordinary emergency meeting on the morning of the 21st instant and appointed an independent committee of enquiry. . . . Photographers have been engaged to take photographs of the wounded. We shall be thankful if you kindly advise us as to what steps should be taken to redress our grievances in this respect.

Swadeshi propaganda is being pushed on with greater vigour than heretofore. . . .

Up to now thirty persons have been convicted in connection with the Congress propaganda, and twenty-seven of them are still in jail. Prosecution is pending against six.

The facts are set forth with such precision, that it is hard to suspect any exaggeration. And yet it is equally hard to credit the authorities with such utter callousness as is to be inferred from the description given by Prasanna Babu. Manifestly the crowd was in a holiday mood. Thank God, prisons have ceased to frighten us. The people therefore illuminated their houses, and went in a procession to see the prisoners off. There could be no violent intent in this. But it was too much for the Magistrate. He evidently thought that the deterrent effect of the punishment he had inflicted was being counteracted by these rejoicings and that in time he might have to turn the whole of Chittagong into a prison to accommodate the whole population. He therefore resorted to the Gurkha charge. It is difficult (assuming the truth of the report) in any other manner to account for the brutal action taken against totally innocent holiday-makers. It is clear, too, that the members of the so-called Peace and Order Associations are playing into the hands of the bureaucracy. These are no doubt trying circumstances. But we counted the cost when we entered upon the course. We must pay it. We must go through the fiery ordeal, and prove our purity before we are admitted to the promised land. The leaders and the people of Chittagong deserve to be warmly congratulated upon their exemplary self-restraint and calmness under circumstances the most provoking. I can tender no other advice than to say that they should pursue their even course in spite of greater dangers still. The only redress that is open to us is each time to show greater courage and greater self-control, till at last

the tyrant falls exhausted under the weight of his own effort. The non-co-operators of Chittagong ought not to feel irritated against the members of Aman Sabhas or of the Government. They but act according to their natures. A non-co-operator's nature is neither to retaliate nor to bend. He must stand erect unmoved by the storm raging round him. If we may truthfully sing and pray, let us sing:

> So long Thy power has blest me, sure it still
> Will lead me on, o'er moor and fen,
> O'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone.[1]

Young India, 3-11-1921

167. CO-OPERATION

Probably very few workers have noticed that progress of hand-spinning means the greatest voluntary co-operation the world has ever seen. It means co-operation among millions of human beings scattered over a very wide area and working for their daily bread. No doubt agriculture has required much co-operative effort, but hand-spinning requires still greater and more honest co-operation. Wheat grows more by nature's honesty than by man's. Manufacture of yarn in our cottages is dependent solely on human honesty. Hand-spinning is impossible without the willing and intelligent co-operation of millions of human beings. We have to arrive at a stage when the spinner like the grain-seller is assured of a steady market for his yarn as well as the supply of cotton slivers if he or she does not know the process of carding. Is it any wonder if I claim that hand-spinning can drive away as if by magic the growing pauperism of the masses? An English friend sends me a newspaper cutting showing the progress of machinery in China. He has evidently imagined that in advocating hand-spinning I am propagating my ideas about machinery. I am doing nothing of the kind. I would favour the use of the most elaborate machinery if thereby India's pauperism and resulting idleness be avoided. I have suggested hand-spinning as the only ready means of driving away penury and making famine of work and wealth impossible. The spinning-wheel itself is a piece of valuable machinery, and in my own humble way I have tried to secure improvements in it in keeping with the special conditions of India. The only question therefore that a lover of India and humanity

[1] From Cardinal Newman's poem "Lead Kindly Light"

has to address himself to is how best to devise practical means of alleviating India's wretchedness and misery. No scheme of irrigation or other agricultural improvement that human ingenuity can conceive can deal with the vastly scattered population of India or provide work for masses of mankind who are constantly thrown out of employment. Imagine a nation working only five hours per day on an average, and this not by choice but by force of circumstances, and you have a realistic picture of India.

If the reader would visualize the picture, he must dismiss from his mind the busy fuss of the city life or the grinding fatigue of the factory life or the slavery of the plantations. These are but drops in the ocean of Indian humanity. If he would visualize the picture of the Indian skeleton, he must think of the eighty per cent of the population which is working its own fields and which has practically no occupation for at least four months in the year and which therefore lives on the borderland of starvation. This is the normal condition. The ever-recurring famines make a large addition to this enforced idleness. What is the work that these men and women can easily do in their own cottages so as to supplement their very slender resources? Does anyone still doubt that it is only hand-spinning and nothing else? And I repeat that this can be made universal in a few months' time, if only the workers will. Indeed it is on a fair way to becoming universal. Experts only are needed to organize it. People are ready, and what is most in favour of hand-spinning is that it is not a new and untried method but people have up to recently been using it. Its successful reintroduction does need skilful endeavour, honesty and co-operation on the largest scale known to the world. And if India can achieve this co-operation, who shall deny that India has by that one act achieved swaraj?

Young India, 3-11-1921

168. TO CORRESPONDENTS

AVADH BEHARI LAL: I am sorry I cannot publish your letter as it is impossible to open the columns of *Young India* to a discussion of Hinduism. My article must be my last word on Hinduism till I have more leisure. It is in no way intended to serve as authority for others. It was intended merely to give my own definition of *sanatana* Hinduism. I may be utterly wrong and be repudiated by every *sanatani*. I should hope even then to be able to stand by my faith. If the great mass of Hindus repudiate my claim, I shall be content to remain an outcaste.

G. S. RAMAMURTI: Untouchability cannot be given a secondary place on the programme. Without the removal of the taint, swaraj is a meaningless term. Workers should welcome social boycott and even public execration in the prosecution of their work. I consider the removal of untouchability as a most powerful factor in the process of attainment of swaraj and for that matter also the Khilafat. Impure Hinduism cannot help the process of Islamic purification.

LAL: Prayer is undoubtedly a great aid to national regeneration. The charkha assists prayer. It is never a hindrance. A mere mechanical prayer is worse than useless, for it deceives one into self-complacency. Non-co-operation is mass education. The masses do not need to be told to pray. Only life has to be breathed into their prayers.

J. BHATTACHARYA: I wish I could publish your letter if only for its brilliance. But I am afraid it will be misunderstood. There is altogether too much blind following in the country. The instances you quote are inapplicable to the present movement which essentially consists in making everyone think for himself. My conception of swaraj is not that of many blindly following one man. The Poet[1] has rightly protested against that tendency and not against enlightened obedience to chosen leadership.

Young India, 3-11-1921

169. CANONS OF INTERPRETATION

Principal A. B. Dhruva of the Benares Hindu University has contributed to the Gujarati monthly called *Vasanta* a learned article on the true method of interpretation of the Shastras and its applicability to the place of untouchability in them. Copious correspondence, some of a technical nature and some based on what in my opinion is an ignorant conception of the Shastras, has been received by me. The writers, I am aware, are actuated by honest motives. It is not possible to devote the columns of a small weekly like *Young India* to all this correspondence. I am anxious nevertheless to satisfy these correspondents through some learned authority. Principal Dhruva in my opinion is such an authority. His learning is beyond question and so are his honesty and impartiality. His article cannot fail to be of interest to those who are anxious to secure a just and speedy solution of the question of

[1] Rabindranath Tagore in "The Call of Truth"

untouchability. I have had it translated for *Young India*. Nothing has consoled me so much as to find Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and the learned Principal both claiming to be and accepted as orthodox Hindus ranging themselves whole-heartedly on the side of the removal of this blot upon Hinduism.

Young India, 3-11-1921

170. EDUCATION AND NON-CO-OPERATION

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

In the *Kartik* issue of the *Pravasi*, a Bengali monthly edited by the reputed journalist Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, appears an article over the initials S.C. on the present educational activities of Russia. In this article occurs a passage to which I wish to draw your attention. I am translating it below.

"But even under the stress of the present upheavals Russia has kept burning her torch of learning, faint though it is. None has advised her, like the wise patriots of our country (India), to let education wait. Russia knows that no vital antagonism (incompatibility) exists between war and education, as exists between water and oil."

I apologize for the bad rendering but this is the idea contained in the few Bengali lines I refer to.

I do not exactly understand what the writer means by these lines and as Mr. Gandhi is one of the "wise patriots who have advised us to let education wait", I would respectfully request him to express his views on the above passage, as such a view is held by a section of the community which declares itself to be "sane" and "rational".

Yours, etc.,
PURULIA, PHANINDRANATH DASGUPTA

I am not surprised at the view expressed in the *Pravasi*. In my humble opinion it betrays at once ignorance of the position of the "wise patriots" and a distorted view of education. The Russians are not non-co-operating with their existing institutions. And yet in a state of war there too "the torch of learning is burning faint" even as in non-co-operation schools. But what happened in England when it was at war with Germany? How many schools were then going on in England? I know, that the Inns of Court and many colleges were practically closed. I know that

during the Boer War not a Boer child had literary education. The Boer children's education consisted in suffering for the sake of their country. The fact is that the present peaceful movement is so silent and gentle on the whole, that it is possible for those who do not believe in the doctrine to continue the education of their children under a system against which the country is "waging war". That the movement is the more effective for its gentleness will, I prophesy, be recorded by the future historian with grateful appreciation. Lastly we have little reason to be proud of our educational institutions which by their very nature are accessible to a mere fringe of our population. In our state of intoxication we do not perceive the disastrous effect of the present system of education on the country. I have taxed myself to find something to the credit of the system in the way of a solution of the vital problems affecting the country. I have failed to find a single thing of that character. There are today 7,851,946 children receiving instruction in our schools. I claim that it is impossible under the present system even to double the number of learners during the next fifty years. If education is to be universal, the system will have to be revised out of all recognition. This is possible only by non-co-operation. Public conscience cannot be stung into quickness with a milder remedy.

Young India, 3-11-1921

171. HINDUS IN AFGHANISTAN

TO
THE EDITOR
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

If an insignificant Indian, who does not believe in the attainment of swaraj by non-co-operation and who thinks that the Khilafat agitation is strengthening the hands of those who, in their heart of hearts, are preparing for the restoration of Muslim rule, far more despotic and iniquitous than the present "Satanic" Government, if such an Indian who yet loves his country in his own way, deserves any attention, then may I make the following enquiry?

I read in Bellow's *Journal of Political Mission to Afghanistan* that the Hindkis, i.e., Hindus of Afghanistan were subject to many indignities and iniquitous disabilities; for example they had to pay the *Jaziya*, they must wear a distinctive dress, they must not ride a horse upon a saddle,

etc. These things were, of course, sanctioned by the Muslim Government of Afghanistan. I am not aware of any change for the better since. You have many friends, Khilafatwalas, who have openly declared in favour of an Afghan invasion of India. Will you inform the Hindus, if the legal disabilities of the Hindus of Afghanistan have been removed? If not, should you not plead for their removal as strongly as you are doing in the case of the so-called "slave-like" treatment of Indians by the "Satanic" Government? The race to which this "Satanic" Government belongs never treated Indians so unfairly as the Muslim rulers of Afghanistan did the Hindus.

I believe that you are doing greater good by your strong attitude regarding untouchability than by your support of the Khilafat. If you can remove untouchability and the provincial differences among Hindus, you will become one of the greatest benefactors of humanity. The Muslims are strong enough to take care of themselves.

I am, etc.,
R. C. BANERJEE

RATAN GANJ,
October 24, 1921

I do not know anything about the treatment of Hindus in Afghanistan, but I am prepared for the moment to assume the truth of the statement referred to by the correspondent. It would be relevant, if we were trying to introduce Afghan rule in India. I am only concerned with the present misrule in India, which, if it permits me to ride a horse, has reduced me to serfdom in my own country. Nor can I be deterred from overthrowing the present misrule for fear of Afghan or other Muslim rule creeping in. The correspondent will find that when we have attained swaraj, we shall have attained the ability to resist any other misrule. We shall have learnt, without the necessity of a training at Sandhurst, the art of dying for country and religion.

Young India, 3-11-1921

172. *SPEECH ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, A.I.C.C., DELHI*

November 4, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in moving the resolution[1] . . . said that if asked as to the progress made by India during the last ten months he would unhesitatingly say that India had been able to make tremendous headway. If they were simply to gauge the quantity of progress there was every reason to feel proud of it, but if he were to judge that progress in terms of swaraj as a physician and was asked to say whether it was sufficient for the removal of the triple disease that they were suffering from, then he had to confess it fell far short of the requirements. Hence the necessity of repetition and emphasis, in the course of the civil disobedience resolution, of the complete fulfilment of all vital items of the programme of non-co-operation so far sanctioned, particularly those mentioned in the resolution. He read to the audience a telegram from Maulana Mahomed Ali's Private Secretary depicting the hardships they were undergoing by being treated as ordinary prisoners. He therefore warned all against light-heartedly launching on civil disobedience. He continued, certainly they should not expect gentleness from this Government nor had they any right to expect it. They were prepared to give no quarter to the Government and should expect none. The bigger the injustice and hardships they were put to and the greater the patience and unflinching determination they observed, the sooner would swaraj come.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi defined civil disobedience as civil revolution which, wherever practised, would mean an end of Government authority in that particular area and open defiance of Government and its laws. It was a gigantic step and, although provincial autonomy was being granted to provincial organizations in this matter, he advised all to wait before launching on it and see what he did, if it was at all possible in his own district of Gujarat, and after seeing the result they should follow his example which should open the eyes of the whole world to their wonderful achievement. He knew that at present mass civil disobedience was impossible and he would be quite satisfied if in such a big continent only one tahsil or district fully prepared should practise it rather than that the whole unprepared masses should partake in it. He advised caution and virtually asked them to wait till he gave the lead from Gujarat in the course of the next fortnight. He reiterated his warning that in view of the gigantic step which the resolution allowed nothing should be done without full recognition of the realities so that once a step was taken there should be no tracing back . . . .

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

When Mr. Gandhi concluded his opening speech, a volley of amendments rushed forth . . . to secure relaxations in the conditions. . . . Mr. Gandhi and the supporters of his view emphasized that, having pledged and believing that it was only through complete fulfilment of swadeshi programme that they could attain swaraj, it would be laying the axe at the very root of the edifice so far built if they were to omit strict compliance with the swadeshi programme. It was much better to have only one tahsil or one district in the whole of India which could practise civil disobedience rather than the entire country unprepared for it. . . .

After heated discussion . . . all amendments for deletion of strict swadeshi clauses were defeated . . . Mr. Gandhi urged that they should arrive at a conclusion which all of them should feel as the right one and should earnestly and sincerely try to put into practice. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 7-11-1921

173. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C., DELHI

November 5, 1921

On the resolution regarding renouncing Government service Mr. Gandhi said that while the motion declared it as an inherent right of every citizen to offer his advice on Government service, he emphasized that Congress Committee was not issuing a mandate that all must go to the barracks to advise the soldiers to come out. This mandate was not issued not for fear of imprisonment but due to their inability at present to provide all soldiers who would come out. There was however full freedom for individuals on their own responsibility to actually go to the barracks and ask the soldiers to leave the army. Personally he had advised hundreds of soldiers to give up the service.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-11-1921

174. SPEECH AT MATHURA[2]

November 5, 1921

Mr. Gandhi . . . dealing with the question of attainment of swaraj by the end of October, said he had never said that he could personally bring about conditions which would bend [*sic*] them for it. It was for those who as delegates of the last Indian National Congress had pledged themselves to carrying out the programme of non-co-operation laid down by the Congress

[1] The meeting agreed to authorize the Working Committee to relax the conditions in exceptional cases.

[2] Pandit Motilal Nehru presiding

172. *SPEECH ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, A.I.C.C., DELHI*

November 4, 1921

Mr. Gandhi in moving the resolution[1] . . . said that if asked as to the progress made by India during the last ten months he would unhesitatingly say that India had been able to make tremendous headway. If they were simply to gauge the quantity of progress there was every reason to feel proud of it, but if he were to judge that progress in terms of swaraj as a physician and was asked to say whether it was sufficient for the removal of the triple disease that they were suffering from, then he had to confess it fell far short of the requirements. Hence the necessity of repetition and emphasis, in the course of the civil disobedience resolution, of the complete fulfilment of all vital items of the programme of non-co-operation so far sanctioned, particularly those mentioned in the resolution. He read to the audience a telegram from Maulana Mahomed Ali's Private Secretary depicting the hardships they were undergoing by being treated as ordinary prisoners. He therefore warned all against light-heartedly launching on civil disobedience. He continued, certainly they should not expect gentleness from this Government nor had they any right to expect it. They were prepared to give no quarter to the Government and should expect none. The bigger the injustice and hardships they were put to and the greater the patience and unflinching determination they observed, the sooner would swaraj come.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi defined civil disobedience as civil revolution which, wherever practised, would mean an end of Government authority in that particular area and open defiance of Government and its laws. It was a gigantic step and, although provincial autonomy was being granted to provincial organizations in this matter, he advised all to wait before launching on it and see what he did, if it was at all possible in his own district of Gujarat, and after seeing the result they should follow his example which should open the eyes of the whole world to their wonderful achievement. He knew that at present mass civil disobedience was impossible and he would be quite satisfied if in such a big continent only one tahsil or district fully prepared should practise it rather than that the whole unprepared masses should partake in it. He advised caution and virtually asked them to wait till he gave the lead from Gujarat in the course of the next fortnight. He reiterated his warning that in view of the gigantic step which the resolution allowed nothing should be done without full recognition of the realities so that once a step was taken there should be no tracing back . . . .

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

When Mr. Gandhi concluded his opening speech, a volley of amendments rushed forth . . . to secure relaxations in the conditions. . . . Mr. Gandhi and the supporters of his view emphasized that, having pledged and believing that it was only through complete fulfilment of swadeshi programme that they could attain swaraj, it would be laying the axe at the very root of the edifice so far built if they were to omit strict compliance with the swadeshi programme. It was much better to have only one tahsil or one district in the whole of India which could practise civil disobedience rather than the entire country unprepared for it. . . .

After heated discussion . . . all amendments for deletion of strict swadeshi clauses were defeated . . . Mr. Gandhi urged that they should arrive at a conclusion which all of them should feel as the right one and should earnestly and sincerely try to put into practice. . . .[1]

The Hindu, 7-11-1921

173. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C., DELHI

November 5, 1921

On the resolution regarding renouncing Government service Mr. Gandhi said that while the motion declared it as an inherent right of every citizen to offer his advice on Government service, he emphasized that Congress Committee was not issuing a mandate that all must go to the barracks to advise the soldiers to come out. This mandate was not issued not for fear of imprisonment but due to their inability at present to provide all soldiers who would come out. There was however full freedom for individuals on their own responsibility to actually go to the barracks and ask the soldiers to leave the army. Personally he had advised hundreds of soldiers to give up the service.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 8-11-1921

174. SPEECH AT MATHURA[2]

November 5, 1921

Mr. Gandhi . . . dealing with the question of attainment of swaraj by the end of October, said he had never said that he could personally bring about conditions which would bend [*sic*] them for it. It was for those who as delegates of the last Indian National Congress had pledged themselves to carrying out the programme of non-co-operation laid down by the Congress

[1] The meeting agreed to authorize the Working Committee to relax the conditions in exceptional cases.

[2] Pandit Motilal Nehru presiding

and the people of the country, to blame themselves for not having fulfilled their pledge. The country had not yet proved its capacity for it. The simple course of renunciation and discipline which alone could help them to win swaraj had not yet been completed. It was all the more incumbent on the country now to put forth all its energy to complete the remaining programme before the end of this year and if they succeeded in doing so he staked his life on the assurance that they would get swaraj by the end of the year.

Resolutions were adopted on civil disobedience, boycott of the Prince's visit and expressing that the Indian National Congress should at its forthcoming session definitely assert and declare to the world the Indian people's inalienable right and ultimate will to independent sovereignty, excluding all relations with foreign powers and nations including Great Britain.

The Hindu, 11-11-1921

175. DUTY OF HINDUS

I draw the attention of all Hindus to the touching letter given below[1] which I have received from the Antyajashram at Godhra.

Every Hindu should hang his head in shame on reading this letter. We, and not the boy's parents, are responsible for the beating which he got. We have despised *Antyajas*, given them our left-overs and rotten food to eat, persuading ourselves that we were doing a virtuous deed. We paid them as little as possible and drove them to begging. Not only have we made them carry our filth, but we have also made them eat filth. We have been giving them our discarded garments to serve as finery. The result is that the *Antyajas* now like begging and feel proud when they get left-overs. When parents return home with rotten grain, the children dance with joy. The master whose slaves rejoice in their slavery has sinned beyond measure. This is the position of the Hindus.

The child who got a beating for his reformed habits and for refusing to eat left-overs was our child. After reading this article, let all parents look at their children and ask themselves how they would feel if the latter were in the same plight as the other child. And how pure was that boy! Though beaten he refused to eat meat! What must be the mental condition of those who regard such a child as untouchable? Will they be able to enjoy swaraj? Will they protect others?

[1] Not translated here. The letter, written by a teacher in the Antyajashram described the unhappy condition of the pupils in their homes. The parents disliked their children's reformed habits and treated them very harshly.

At the moment, however, I do not wish to say anything about untouchability to the caste-Hindu parents. Will they not have even simple compassion on their "untouchable" brothers? Is it also in the Shastras to give them dirty, left-over food and pay them as little as possible? I request all parents:

1. Not to give *Antyajas* cooked food;
2. to give them only uncooked grain;
3. not to give them garments of foreign cloth or worn-out and dirty clothes;
4. to raise their wages, if they are low; and
5. whatever they give, to give it with love.

I urge those *Antyajas* who may read this article to resolve that they will not accept or eat rotten grain or left-over food or meat and advise them to send their children to the national schools which may be started for them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-11-1921

176. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

DELHI,
Silence Day [*November 7, 1921*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Dil means the self, because it means the heart. *Tandurust* [healthy] is a hackneyed word. I wanted to write to you about [the health of] your body, but how could I be content with wishing you only physical health?

I always looked upon Parasram as a son though I saw his faults. I have regarded you as a friend. I feel no hesitation in welcoming Durga as a daughter at the very first meeting. Jamnalal has been persistently claiming to be a son, but somehow I cannot put myself in the position of a father to him.

About one *bhajan* of yours, I felt that I had read it. However, why should not a similar one suggest itself to you? But I have already replied to you yesterday in this regard before your letter reached me. Your thinking constantly about the *atman* during your illness covered swaraj as well. It was not at all necessary to think about swaraj separately.

1 From the references to *Dil*, *tandurust* and a *bhajan* of the addressee, it is evident that this letter was written on the Silence Day immediately following the one on October 31, 1921; *vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 31-10-1921.

We must perform the duties arising from the existence of the body. Eating, bathing, going from place to place for begging, — all these we do, thinking them to be legitimate activities, and show aversion only to bread-labour; purification of the mind is achieved by mental *yajna*, that of the *atman* by *yajna* of the *atman*, and of the body by *yajna* of the body [i.e., physical labour]. Man cannot make a proper return for the food he gets for his body by doing mental work. One does *yajna* [of the body] if one labours without expecting food in return. At the present time and in this country, *yajna* of the body can be performed only by working on the spinning-wheel, for its absence has enfeebled the body of the country. If the climate of India and our needs change, we can take up another kind of *yajna*. If it comes about that for getting water in our country we have always to dig wells, then digging of wells would become a sacrifice to some extent. But then, as long as such a state of things continues, bodily *yajna* is necessary just as *brahmacharya* and other things are necessary. And because it is only a duty attaching to the body, the latter can be free from the obligation of performing this *yajna* when it does not consume food. But unlike in the case of prayer which being an act of the mind or the heart, a man like me believes or persuades himself that he is performing it all the twenty-four hours and does not have a fixed time for it every day, one cannot persuade oneself that one is performing bodily *yajna* without actually doing so, since it is an act to be performed by the body. One may not perform it with one's whole heart behind it and so deceive people, that would be another matter; but perform it, one must. This answers both your questions on the subject.

I misunderstood Sri Das's telegram. I also misunderstood Chotani Mian's letter. There was no attempt deliberately to create a false impression. Chotani Mian did not correct my impression even when I had a personal talk with him. It is true we did not have a long talk. But one who fails to get the real meaning is not being wholly truthful. I know, of course, if I can completely follow non-violence, truth and *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought, then we should certainly get swaraj this year; we may also get it if someone else from among us can do these things, or if the *tapas* of all of us taken together proves sufficient for the purpose. In the first instance, however, I have not given up this hope in regard to myself . . .[1] spare no effort . . .[2]

From a photostat S.N. 11424

[1] & [2] The original is damaged here.

177. CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT NATIONAL COLLEGE, LAHORE[1]

November 9, 1921

Gandhiji began by saying that he considered himself fortunate in being asked to confer degrees on students of the National College. He congratulated the candidates and also blessed them. He prayed to God to grant them strength to live up to the pledge they had taken that day. Let their hearts be steeled henceforth to serve their country. To him the acceptance of a degree only meant the undertaking of a determination to be ready to win the country's freedom by doing practical work. That was the way pointed out by the history of all nations. He had witnessed three great wars and had observed how education approximated to the national ideals of the time. When he thought of September last he did not feel sorry. They had decided what sort of education to impart to India of the future. They had not been able so far to achieve the amount of success they desired. The result of bad treatment in a certain school had been that a student had written to him regarding his determination to commit suicide. Readers of *Young India* would remember it. If in future any student is badly treated he hoped he would not write to him thus. He had received a telegram from Vizagapatam that the students of the medical school had determined not to go back because their Principal had expelled them for wearing khaddar. They had resolved to serve their country and free her from bondage. He had replied congratulating them on their resolve. The best surgeon was he who devised the best remedy for their country's salvation. Thousands died of the plague, cholera, malaria, etc., but he did not mind that; but he did mind if a single individual lived in slavery.

If people did not feel like that even after December next, he felt as if he would commit suicide. But he would not do so as he did not approve of putting an end to one's existence. He would think of only one occasion when it would be better to kill oneself. That was when a man cast an evil eye on another woman. Another occasion was for a woman when she found a man bent upon wickedness towards her. At such a time it was better for her to immolate herself. Indian ladies were chaste even as was Sita.

He has just listened to the beautiful strains of *Vandemataram*. In 1915 he had heard the same in Madras.[2] It was then that he bethought himself what that song really meant to them. Had they the right to sing thus? They saluted Mother India and invoked her protection. But what was India's present

[1] Delivered in Hindi at Bradlaugh Hall; Lala Lajpat Rai presided.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 64.

plight? Millions of her children got one meal a day and that too consisted of but bread and salt. There were no vegetables, etc., to partake. Could they honestly say that their motherland gave them protection? They were the unworthy children of the motherland.

A Hindu from Peshawar who stood six feet high had come to him and complained that frontier Mohammedans molested their women. Why had he not died defending his women? Only that morning someone had told him something which in effect amounted to this that he (Mahatma Gandhi) was mad if he sought the friendship of Muslims. His reply was that he desired Muslim friendship because he had courage. If one Mohammedan did something wicked, it was not right to ban the whole class. Similar was the case with Hindus who were guilty of Dyerism in regard to untouchables. If Mohammedans in the Punjab were more than fifty per cent, Hindus need not be afraid of them. Hindus did not want to play false towards Mussulmans; then why need they be afraid of the latter? All ancient teaching pointed out that virtue was the reward of virtue and treachery should be met with more treachery. All had taught the same lesson whether Dayanand[1] or Ramanuja or Madhva. If Hindus wanted to deal honestly they need fear none. The same applied to Mohammedans and Sikhs.

Lalaji had said towards the close of his speech that the time was coming before December next when probably he (Mahatmaji) and Lalaji himself and, others would be arrested. In that case they should not indulge in incendiarism and the cutting of rails, they should not cast an evil eye on an English lady, nor go on hartal. Such conduct on their part would mean that they were cowards. The true hero is he who remains peaceful and non-violent. They should restrain their anger, each one of them should be a leader unto himself. Then swaraj was attained. They should remember the example of Prahlad, the gallant youth who defied Hiranyakashipu the swordsman, because his God was with him.

If a certain leader of theirs became haughty or over-bearing he should be removed. They should cultivate within themselves the attributes of Wordsworth's "[Character of the] Happy Warrior". Swaraj was no difficult thing to achieve.

The next condition for swaraj was charkha. It was said in the Punjab that spinning was the work of women. But the inventor of the spinning-jenny in England was a man, Hargreaves by name. Similarly it was said that cooking was the special work of ladies. In a Paris hotel there was a cook who was an expert. He knew far better the art of cooking than any lady could lay claim to. He was drawing a pay equal to that of the Viceroy of India. He was not sure whether the Viceroy deserved the large salary he was in receipt of but he knew that the Paris cook deserved his pay. They should remember that it is their duty

[1] Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83); founder of the Arya Samaj

to spin. The moment they gave up the charkha, they also gave up their dharma. If they wanted to free India, they should use the charkha. They could not banish poverty from their land until they took to charkha. By becoming swadeshi he meant using pure swadeshi and not mill-made yarn. In their national schools weaving and spinning was taught. When civil disobedience would be launched every student in the Punjab should regard it his duty to dress himself in khaddar.

Lalaji had asked him to speak a few words to the students. He wanted to remind the students of the Punjab that they had been forced to salute the the Union Jack. They were made to march 18 miles a day. All sorts of insults were heaped on them during martial law. They should consider it *haraam*[1] to use foreign yarn. They should take to charkha and *kargha*.

After Mahatma Gandhi had finished, Lala Lajpat Rai thanked Mahatmaji for the trouble he had taken in coming over to them and addressing them.

The Hindu, 19-11-1921

178. NOTES

A Plea for Spinning

A determined opposition was put up against the conditions regarding swadeshi that were laid down in the civil disobedience resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi. It was directed against two requirements, namely that the civil resister offering resistance in terms of that resolution was bound to know hand-spinning and use only hand-spun and hand-woven khadi; and that in the event of a district or tahsil offering civil disobedience *en masse* the district or the tahsil concerned must manufacture its own yarn and cloth by the hand. The opposition betrayed woeful ignorance of the importance of hand-spinning. Nothing but hand-spinning can banish pauperism from the land. Paupers cannot become willing sufferers. They have never known the pain of plenty to appreciate the happiness of voluntarily suffering hunger or other bodily discomfort. Swaraj for them can only mean ability to support themselves without begging. To awaken among them a feeling of discontent with their lot without providing them with the means of removing the cause thereof is to court certain destruction, anarchy, outrage and plunder in which they themselves will be the chief victims. Hand-spinning alone can possibly supply them with supplementary and additional earnings. Hand-weaving for many and carding for a limited number

[1] Sinful

can provide complete livelihood. But hand-weaving is not a lost art. Several million men know hand-weaving. But very few know hand-spinning in the true sense of the term. Tens of thousands are, it is true, turning the wheel today but only a few are spinning yarn. The cry all over is that hand-spun yarn is not good enough for warp. Just as half-baked bread is no bread, even so ill-spun weak thread is no yarn. Thousands of men must know hand-spinning to be able in their respective districts to improve the quality of the yarn that is now being spun in the country. Therefore those who offer civil disobedience for the sake of establishing swaraj must know hand-spinning. Mark, they are not required to turn out yarn every day. It would be well if they did. But they must know how to spin even properly twisted yarn. It was a happy omen to me that in spite of the opposition the amendment was rejected by a large majority. One argument advanced in favour of rejection was that the Sikh men considered it an undignified occupation to spin and looked down upon hand-weaving. I do hope that the sentiment is not representative of the brave community. Any community that despises occupations that bring an honest livelihood is a community going down an incline. If spinning has been the speciality of women, it is because they have more leisure and not because it is an inferior occupation. The underlying suggestion that a wielder of the sword will not wield the wheel is to take a distorted view of a soldier's calling. A man who lives by the sword does *not* serve his community even as the soldiers in the employ of the Government do not serve the country. The wielding of the sword is an unnatural occupation resorted to among civilized people only on extra-ordinary occasions and only for self-defence. To live by hand-spinning and hand-weaving is any day more *manly* than to live by killing. Aurangzeb was not the less a soldier for sewing caps. What we prize in the Sikhs is not their ability to kill. The late Sardar Lachhman Singh will go down to posterity as a hero because he knew how to die. The *mahant*[1] of Nankana Saheb will go down to posterity as a murderer. I hope therefore that no man will decline to learn the beautiful life-giving art of hand-spinning on the ground of its supposed inferiority.

MILL-SPUN *v.* HAND-SPUN

The attack against the requirement that a resistant district or tahsil should manufacture its own cloth had more reason than

[1] Custodian of a temple

prejudice in it. And if the present intention was to require every tahsil to join in offering mass civil disobedience, the requirement would be impossible of fulfilment. But nobody expects every tahsil or district to be ready for civil disobedience and thus to be self-contained during the few remaining months. It is enough if only a few tahsils are ready. Swaraj must be held an impossibility during the year if not even a few tahsils are self-contained and thus ready for swaraj. Any tahsil which grows its own food, spins its own yarn, weaves its own cloth and is ready to suffer for its freedom is certainly ready to establish swaraj during the year. And if even one tahsil can accomplish the task, it will be like a light lighting a whole house. I hold successful civil disobedience to be impossible without the pioneer effort being made under almost ideal conditions. There are no doubt parts of India where complete manufacture of woollens and calico by hand-spinning is not a present possibility. But when those parts where it is a present possibility are completely organized, there should be no difficulty about relaxing the requirement regarding such parts.

Hindustani

Hindustani, i.e., the language of the common people, is fast becoming the medium of expression in the All-India Congress Committee. There are members in the Committee who do not understand a word of English, and there are members from the Madras Presidency who do not understand Hindustani. The Bengali members understand Hindustani with difficulty. The latter however appreciate the necessity of Hindustani speech and do not grumble at the proceedings being conducted in Hindustani. It was a real sacrifice for the Dravidians. At the last meeting only one member attended from Madras and not many could come from Malabar. But when all the Dravidians attend, the difficulty becomes serious. And yet there seems to be no way out of it save for the Dravidians to pick up enough Hindustani as early as possible. Those who do not know English cannot be expected to learn English and the popular assemblies must more and more tend to contain members who do not understand English. Apart therefore from the sentimental and national value of Hindustani, the necessity of all national workers learning Hindustani and the national proceedings being conducted in Hindustani is being increasingly felt. Whilst however this was recognized at the last meeting, the Dravidian and the Bengali members would not listen to a hard and fast rule being adopted by the Committee. They would gladly tolerate Hindustani voluntarily spoken but

will not have it imposed by a resolution of the Committee. The matter was finally referred to the Working Committee. In the face of the divided feeling the Working Committee will find it difficult to bring out a suggestion that will be unanimously accepted by the members.

Mr. Tyagi's Letter

I had thought I had closed the controversy arising out of my writing[1] questioning Mr. Tyagi's bravery. But it gives me pleasure to be able to present the reader with a free translation of a letter received by me from him on his way as a prisoner to Meerut:

> I was not able to see *Young India* containing your defence of your dear friend Maulana Shaukat Ali. I received it rather late as I was fortunately in jail at the time. I have the unhappy news of your reference to me as chicken-hearted and cowardly. I cannot describe to you the pain I felt when I saw myself described by those adjectives. I try to console myself with the belief, that what you have written was written in good faith, but my soul refuses to be satisfied. Your opinion seems to be that on being slapped I should have attempted to leave the court and suffered the consequence of any such attempt. I admit I could have done so. But the spectators, it is likely, on witnessing more violence, which, it is certain, the magistrate blind with power would have done to me, might have laid their hands on him. The result would have been firing. And by my loss of restraint, hundreds of my countrymen would have been shot. This was the only thought that deterred me. And yet I did not remain totally inactive. Have you not yet seen the letter I wrote to the magistrate immediately after the incident? When the magistrate, after the administering of violence, asked me whether I had any statement to make, I replied in a loud voice, "I decline to make any statement before a court so unjust and lawless as yours and in which accused are assaulted by it." Is not the above statement sufficient evidence that I was not cowed down? Whatever I did at the time I did for my country's good and I never thought that it would be displeased with my action. I alone know how difficult it was for me to remain calm on receiving the slap. If you still think I have erred, you will forgive me. My respects to my country.

Indeed Mr. Tyagi's countrymen who were present and witnessed his bearing did realize that he had acted in the country's interest. I, a distant critic, not knowing that he had let the magis-

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 13-10-1921, under the sub-title "A Contrast"; also "Notes", 20-10-1921, under the sub-titles "A Magistrate's Apology", and "Accused's Statement".

trate understand by his subsequent conduct that his submission was that of the brave, simply analysed the facts as they were sent to me and did this brave countrymen an unintended injustice for which my thousand apologies to him. I know I am most careful in my selection of facts and acts which I criticize or admire from week to week. I know I am most anxious to avoid undeserved blame or praise. But I realize more and more the difficulty of a journalist who is desirous of conveying only the correct news and moulding public opinion in a correct manner.

Non-violent Conduct

The reader will naturally guess that I must have received more protests against the paragraph on Mr. Tyagi. Most of them were answered by my second reference containing my amends, but a Motihari correspondent tells me that my criticism has befogged him. He does not know what he should do in the same circumstances. I confess it is difficult to lay down an infallible rule. Cowardice, bravery, hate, love, untruth, truth are all qualities of the heart. It is easy enough to dissemble virtue as it is difficult always for an outsider to discover it in another. The safest rule is to take men's words at their face value till one has proof to the contrary. I judged Mr. Tyagi's conduct as it was presented to me in its incomplete form. What our own conduct should be might be deduced from the following illustrations. Prahlad was forbidden to take the name of God. Whilst before the prohibition he was going about his way in a silent manner, now he became aggressive and drew on his head the most terrible punishment which he bore cheerfully. Daniel used to worship in secret, but when the prohibition decree was issued against him he flung open his door, worshipped God in public and was led like a lamb to the lion's den. Hazarat Ali, who was more than a match for his adversary, kissed his hand when the latter spat upon him, and when the brave Ali felt that if he retorted it would be the retort of anger. But I know that we possess neither the unalloyed bravery nor the godliness and therefore the true perception of these sages of old. We are not free from anger or fear. We are trying to imbibe the lesson of non-violence and learn fearlessness. Our non-violence is mixed. It is most of the weak and somewhat of the strong. The safest rule for us is to run the risk of becoming and feeling strong. Therefore when a magistrate gives me a slap, I must so act as to invite another. I must however never give any cause for the first slap. If I am rude I must apologize, if I am defiant I must be meek, if I swear I must humble myself. My

conduct before the court must be punctiliously correct. Need I say that it cannot be put on and off at will? It must, in order to appear graceful, be natural. Lastly, whatever we do, we must err on the side of non-violence, if we would reach our goal in the quickest manner possible.

TEMPERANCE WORK A CRIME

A friend sends the following note showing how the officials conceive their duty to the people :

> The visible symbols of our gathering national strength . . . are afforded by the series of prosecutions upon which the Government has launched. . . . Our progressive advance is marked by the thickening of repression. . . . So far . . . no prosecution has been conducted . . . expressly on the charge of doing temperance work. That privilege belongs to Bihar. There is no better illustration of the sinful character of the Government than the case against Kumar Kalika Prasad Sinha, nephew of the Maharaja Bahadur of Gidhaur, who has gone to jail for one year, having declined to furnish security. The charge sheet . . . reads :
>
> "Whereas it appears to me from a report of the police dated the 3rd October 1921 that you, Kalika Prasad Singh alias Hiraji, son of Rao Maheshari Prasad Singh of Mahuligadh P. S. Jamui are a leader of the non-co-operation movement . . . one of your principal objects being the stopping of the sale and purchase of excisable articles, and whereas in your endeavour to attain that object you . . . are importing and engaging persons to picket excise shops . . . and whereas . . . your personal conduct is likely to lead to further breaches of the peace . . . I hereby order you under Sec. 107 Cr. P. C. to show cause before me on 19-10-21 why you should not be required to execute a bond for Rs. 1000/- and furnish two sureties each in Rs. 500/- to keep the peace for one year."

Comment on this is superfluous. The Kumar submitted to the court a spirited statement denying the charge of intimidation and turning upon the Government by saying that the violence was all done by the so-called defenders of law and order.

IS BLOODSHED NECESSARY?

A correspondent asks :

> Do you not in the heart of your heart believe that swaraj in the end can never be attained without bloodshed? Is not non-violent agitation a mere method suited to present times, to unite and discipline people ultimately for a stage of violence and bloody revolution?

This is a frank question. It shows that some people still do not

believe in the truthfulness of the present struggle. There is no earthly reason why, if non-violence was a preparation for violence, I should not say so. When I have committed several offences against the state law, why should I hesitate to say that the present struggle is a preparation for violence? As a matter of fact, not only do I believe a bloodless revolution to be perfectly possible, but many others implicitly believe in non-violence for the purpose of gaining India's freedom. The Ali Brothers absolutely say what they mean and mean what they say. They believe in the use of physical force, i.e., violence, under certain circumstances; but they believe that the circumstances of India do not warrant the use of violence. When "unity and discipline" are attained, we who are thirty crores will consider it unmanly and beneath our dignity to do violence to one lakh of Englishmen. It is want of cohesive thought, calmness and charity in the face of fraud and terrorism, which is responsible for the still lingering impotent rage in our midst. And it is because I believe implicitly in non-violence and believe that violence is ruinous for India, that I have said that when violence becomes the creed of India, I should seek the shelter of the Himalayas.

Is Khadi a Passing Phase?

The same writer further asks :

> Is it possible that when you will concentrate your energy upon some other part of the programme and pay less attention to the agitation of swadeshi, khadi may lose its popularity and people may revert to old fineries? Is not this inferable from the illustration of students now pouring in large numbers in Government schools and colleges which suffered tremendous loss at an hour when withdrawing students was the topic of the day?

The illustration chosen is not happy. The schools and colleges have never recovered from the blow given by the agitation to their prestige. No doubt many who left under excitement have reverted to their old haunts. But witness Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee's wail over the loss suffered by the Bengal colleges. The correspondent is probably unaware of the fact that the leaven is still working. But in any case the school agitation was confined to an infinitesimal number and was in its nature of a temporary character, whereas swadeshi applies to every man, woman and child in India. It is of a permanent nature. Swadeshi is not to be suspended on the attainment of swaraj which is impossible without swadeshi. Lastly, reversion to foreign fineries is an expensive thing.

Therefore, whilst I am prepared to grant that there are people who simply put on swadeshi for show and they are likely to fall out in the end, the vast majority will remain staunch to swadeshi. Swadeshi is not merely a means. It is both a means and an end.

THE EFFECT OF MY ARREST

The correspondent's third question is :

> Do you not believe that the Government hesitates to arrest you not because of our moral victory but because it fears violent mobs bursting out throughout the country? And is it not your conviction that the movement will either go down in speed or be spoiled when you are in a lock-up?

It is difficult to know the Government's mind. I do not know that it has a mind. My surmise is that Government feels the moral force of the movement and fears an outbreak also. That there is still fear of an outbreak is no credit to us. If we could absolutely ensure non-violence under every variety of provocation, we have swaraj that very moment. We have certainly gone a long way in that direction, and it strengthens my faith in the possibility of swaraj being established during this year. I should be deeply disappointed and feel hurt, if my arrest should result in slackening the speed or the movement being spoiled. On the contrary it is my conviction that my arrest will result in removing all sloth and quickening the pace.

INTEREST OF MINORITIES

The final question of this searching examiner is :

> What guarantee is there that when swaraj is obtained, the smaller communities such as the Parsis will not be ruled out by the larger? We often talk of our noble relations, but what crucial test is there that in the swaraj parliament racial prejudice will not assert itself?

The movement is its own test. It is a movement of free growth of opinion. It is one of purification and a nation purified will deserve the curse of mankind, if it allows petty prejudices to rule its deliberations. Moreover the methods being pursued by us provide every interest with power of self-defence. It is the secret of non-co-operation, that it arms the weakest of the community with the power of self-determination and protection.

Young India, 10-11-1921

179. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The present All-India Congress Committee met for the last time at Delhi on the 4th November.[1] The arrangements were under the control of the renowned Hakimji Ajmal Khan. He is ailing and badly needs rest. But he will not have any. His spacious house and Dr. Ansari's have been turned into dharmsalas for the accommodation of guests, whether Hindu or Mohammedan. The Hindus have their prejudices scrupulously respected. Those who will not take even water at a Muslim house are provided separate quarters. Here in Delhi one certainly finds Hindu-Muslim unity in full working order. The Hindus implicitly and gratefully accept Hakimji's leadership and they do not hesitate to place their religious interests too in his keeping.

The All-India Congress Committee is the people's parliament elected annually. It has year by year grown in importance and representative character. And today it is undoubtedly the mouth-piece of all those adult men and women belonging to any religion or party who can afford to pay four annas, who accept the simple creed of the Congress and who have cared to have their names entered in the Congress register. As a matter of fact, the delegates include Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Christians almost perhaps in their numerical proportion. I do not know whether it has Parsis and Jews. It has a very fair proportion of women delegates. It has also *Panchama* delegates. If any interest is under-represented, the fault lies with that interest. The delegates are all unpaid and attend at their own expense and pay for their own board and lodging. If the healthy practice on the part of the inviting cities of entertaining the delegates as guests has sprung up, it is a sign of the liberality of the citizens, no part of their statutory obligation. The majority of these elected representatives travel third-class and are satisfied with mere elementary comforts. The house of this people's parliament consisted of a temporary canvas *pandal* with a few shrubs to decorate it. Chairs and tables were provided, I presume, because it would have been difficult to ensure sufficient cleanliness and freedom from dust in the compound where the *pandal* was erected. Yellow-coloured khadi cloth served as table-cloth for the President's table. The members, both men and women, were dressed mostly in coarse khadi, a few only had

[1] *Vide* "Speech on Civil Disobedience, A.I.C.C., Delhi", 4-11-1921.

what is now known as the Bezwada fineness. The dresses were simple and of Indian style. I have gone into these details, because All-India Congress Committee to many of us is a model for the future parliament under swaraj. It is in keeping with the real state of India. It is somewhat a reflection of the poverty of the country, its simplicity and of its climatic requirements.

Contrast this with the false show, the pomp and the extravagance at Simla and at the new Delhi!

As the outer, so the inner. The most important business of the nation was finished in a most business-like manner inside of twelve hours. Nothing was done or allowed without the closest scrutiny. The resolution on the dispute between the President and the Working Committee was discussed in the calmest manner possible. Jealous of its own rights, the Committee ratified the decision of the Working Committee that the right of interpretation of substantive law belonged to it rather than the President. It would not however allow anything to appear in the resolution which could by any stretch of imagination be considered discourteous to the President.

The resolution of the session was, however, the one on civil disobedience which I give below:

> Whereas there is not much over one month for the fulfilment of the national determination to establish swaraj before the end of the year, and whereas the nation has demonstrated its capacity for exemplary self-restraint by observing perfect non-violence over the arrest and imprisonment of the Ali Brothers and the other leaders, and whereas it is desirable for the nation to demonstrate its capacity for further suffering and discipline, discipline sufficient for the attainment of swaraj, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes every province on its own responsibility to undertake civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes, in the manner that may be considered the most suitable by the respective Provincial Congress Committees subject to the following conditions:
>
> 1. In the event of individual civil disobedience, the individual must know hand-spinning, and must have completely fulfilled that part of the programme which is applicable to him or her, e.g., he or she must have entirely discarded the use of foreign cloth and adopted only hand-spun and hand-woven garments, must be a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity and in the unity amongst all the communities professing different religions in India as an article of faith, must believe in non-violence as absolutely essential for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj, and if a Hindu, must by his personal conduct show that he regards untouchability as a blot upon nationalism.

2. In the event of mass civil disobedience, a district or tahsil should be treated as a unit, and therein a vast majority of the population must have adopted full swadeshi and must be clothed out of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in that district or tahsil, and must believe in and practise all the other items of non-co-operation:

Provided that no civil resister should expect to be supported out of public funds, and members of the families of civil resisters undergoing sentence will be expected to support themselves by carding, hand-spinning, and hand-weaving or any other means;

Provided further that upon application by any Provincial Congress Committee, it is open to the Working Committee to relax the conditions of civil disobedience, if it is satisfied that any conditions should be waived.

Those who were eager to start civil disobedience immediately brought forward a series of amendments which they supported with considerable skill, and yet the speeches were models of brevity. Every one of the amendments was rejected after the fullest discussion. The chief debater was Maulana Hasrat Mohani who being impatient for civil disobedience could not understand the imposition of the tests laid down for would-be civil resisters. One and only one addition was accepted at the instance of the Sikh delegates. They are most sensitive about their special rights. If, therefore, Hindu-Muslim unity was maintained, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity in the Punjab must also be insisted upon. "Then why not mention the others?" was the burden of other speeches. The result was that "unity among all the communities professing other religions" was added. It is a wise addition, for it shows that Hindu-Muslim unity is not a menace but it is a symbol of unity among all.

Whilst, therefore, there is perfect unanimity in the Committee, it would be wrong to suppose that there is no obstruction or opposition in the Committee. The Maharashtra party is a capable and drilled body. It has adopted the programme more from loyalty to the Congress and the rule of majority than from deep conviction. It is giving a trial to a programme in which it has no implicit faith. It makes its presence felt by mild obstruction. But it is too patriotic to carry obstruction to the point of destruction. Mr. Abhyankar[1] fortifies it by his sledge-hammer oratory. Mr. Aney[2] supports it by his calm logic. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta[3] is the free lance of the party. He effectively uses the Com-

[1] M. V. Abhyankar from Nagpur

[2] M. S. Aney (b. 1880) from Berar

[3] 1884-1955; member, A.I.C.C., 1921-31

mittee for developing his debating skill and obstructive tactics. The Committee refuses to treat him seriously, and he lets you know that he does not expect to be treated seriously. The house laughs at his expense and he heartily joins in it. He enlivened the proceedings at the outset by proposing himself to the chair if no other member would allow himself to be proposed in the place of a member of the Working Committee. He considers the members of the Working Committee to be all honourable men, and the measure of the honour is that they are constantly in his opinion arrogating to themselves rights they do not possess.[1] The reader, however, must not think that all this is done with any poison in the performance. I have not known a better-behaved or more good-humoured assembly. And I regard the Maharashtra party to be an acquisition of which any nation would feel proud. Indeed I refer to the party to emphasize my contention that the Committee is composed of men who know their minds and who are determined to give a good account of themselves in their effort to win India's freedom.

Young India, 10-11-1921

180. THE MOMENTOUS ISSUE

The next few weeks should see civil disobedience in full working order in some part of India. With illustrations of partial and individual civil disobedience the country has become familiar. Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the element of violence in it. An out and out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the state. He becomes an outlaw claiming to disregard every unmoral state law. Thus, for instance, he may refuse to pay taxes, he may refuse to recognize the authority of the state in his daily intercourse. He may refuse to obey the law of trespass and claim to enter military barracks in order to speak to the soldiers, he may refuse to submit to limitations upon the manner of picketing and may picket within the prescribed area. In doing all this he never uses force and never resists force when it is used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself. This he does because and when he finds the bodily freedom he seemingly enjoys to be an intolerable burden. He argues to himself, that a state allows personal freedom only in so far as the citizen submits to its regulations. Sub-

[1] For Mehta's protest against this, *vide* "A Protest", 1-12-1921.

mission to the state law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a state wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a state is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the state without committing a moral breach to arrest him. Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state. Is not this the history of all reform? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice?

When a body of men disown the state under which they have hitherto lived, they nearly establish their own government. I say nearly, for they do not go to the point of using force when they are resisted by the state. Their "business" as of the individual is to be locked up or shot by the state, unless it recognizes their separate existence, in other words bows to their will. Thus three thousand Indians in South Africa after due notice to the Government of the Transvaal crossed the Transvaal border in 1914[1] in defiance of the Transvaal immigration law and compelled the Government to arrest them. When it failed to provoke them to violence or to coerce them into submission, it yielded to their demand. A body of civil resisters is, therefore, like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldier, only harder because of want of excitement of an ordinary soldier's life. And as a civil resistance army is or ought to be free from passion because free from the spirit of retaliation, it requires the fewest number of soldiers. Indeed one PERFECT civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right against Wrong.

Though, therefore, the All-India Congress Committee has authorized civil disobedience by Provincial Congress Committees on their own responsibility, I hope they will put due emphasis on the word "responsibility" and not start civil disobedience with a light heart. Every condition must be given its full effect. The mention of Hindu-Mulim unity, non-violence, swadeshi and removal of untouchability means that they have not yet become an integral part of our national life. If an individual or a mass have still misgivings about Hindu-Muslim unity, if they have still any doubt about the necessity of non-violence for the attainment of our triple goal, if they have not yet enforced swadeshi in its com-

[1] On November 6, 1913; *vide* Vol. XII, p. 259.

pleteness, if the Hindus among that mass have still the poison of untouchability in them that mass or that individual are not ready for civil disobedience. Indeed it would be best to watch and wait whilst the experiment is being carried on in one area. Reverting to the analogy of the army, those divisions that watch and wait are just as much co-operating actively as the division that is actually fighting. The only time, whilst the experiment is going on, that individual civil disobedience may be resorted to simultaneously, is when the Government obstruct even the silent prosecution of swadeshi. Thus if an order of prohibition is served upon an expert spinner going to teach or organize spinning, that order should be summarily disregarded and the teacher should court imprisonment. But in all other respects, in so far as I can judge at present, it will be best for every other part of India scrupulously to respect all orders and instructions whilst one part is deliberately taking the offensive and committing a deliberate breach of all the unmoral state laws it possibly can. Needless to add that any outbreak of violence in any other part of India must necessarily injure and may even stop the experiment. The other parts will be expected to remain immovable and unperturbed, even though the people within the area of experiment may be imprisoned, riddled with bullets or otherwise ill-treated by the authorities. We must expect them to give a good account of themselves in every conceivable circumstance.

Young India, 10-11-1921

181. HOW CELIBACY CAN BE OBSERVED

A volunteer has written to me a very pathetic letter saying that, despite his earnest efforts, he cannot observe *brahmacharya*. He suffers from discharges in sleep and often wished to commit suicide. I see panic in this mentality. As long as a man is not doing a wrong deliberately or a man and a woman do not look at each other with a lustful eye, there is no cause for concern. Having learnt to control our mind while we are awake, we should trust to God for what happens in sleep. If there is a discharge in sleep, we should understand that the mind is not yet totally free from lust. "Sense-cravings subside in a man who refrains from gratifying them, but pleasure in their objects remains; it vanishes only when he has had a vision of the supreme."[1] This is a state-

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

ment of experience and is literally true. Sinning is possible only so long as the *atman* has not realized itself. Once it is illuminated, all possibility of sin vanishes. One who constantly strives to observe *brahmacharya* should follow these rules :

1. He should be moderate in eating.

2. He should eschew from his diet spices, excessive ghee, fried articles, sweets, meat, etc.

3. He should of course never take liquor, but even tea, coffee, and other similar drinks may be taken only for medicinal purposes.

4. He should wash his private parts with cold water twice or thrice [a day] and should pour cold water over them.

5. He should never take heavy meals.

6. He should give up late meals in the evening.

7. His last meal should always be light so that he goes to bed with an empty stomach.

8. He should not read erotic books, should not talk about or listen to such things.

9. He should look upon every woman as his sister and never look at anyone with greedy eyes. He should never allow any such thought in his mind that this woman is good-looking and the other is not. If beauty consisted in shape or colour, we would have gratified our sight by looking at statues. Beauty lies in virtue and this is not a thing which can be perceived by the senses. He should control his passions by reflecting that a man who thinks of his mother or sister as beautiful or not beautiful commits a sin.

10. He should never be alone with a woman.

11. He should always keep his body and mind well occupied. I believe regular spinning to be a great help. This is only a guess. I am not yet in a position to speak from experience. It is my conjecture that the spinning-wheel helps more in acquiring self-control than any other type of physical work.

12. He should ever keep repeating God's name for self-purification. A theist believes that God sees the inmost depths of our heart, that He watches our movements even when we sleep. Such a man, therefore, should remain vigilant for all the twenty-four hours. Whatever the work we may be doing, mental or physical, we should never forget to go on repeating God's name. His name delivers us from all our sins. After a little practice, everyone will discover that it is possible to keep repeating God's name while one is doing anything or thinking about anything. Inward repetition of God's name is the only

exception to the general rule that a person can think about only one thing at a time because it is spontaneous to the *atman*. Other thoughts are the product of ignorance. For one who knows that God does everything, who is wholly absorbed in thoughts of Him, what remains for such a one to do or to think about? Such a person stops thinking about his separate identity and regards himself only as an instrument in God's hands. I believe it is impossible to observe perfect *brahmacharya* in action, speech and thought without this constant remembering of God.

Anyone who observes these rules will certainly succeed in mastering his senses. Striving in this manner, he should stop worrying and not be troubled in the least by discharges in sleep. He should regard them as evidence of his not being watchful enough and should become more vigilant, but should not in the least feel nervous. Yes, if his thoughts become impure and he is tempted to infect another person with his impurity, he may by all means commit suicide. Committing suicide is a thousand times preferable to sleeping with another's wife.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-11-1921

182. MY NOTES

AN ADVISER

Says one adviser : "There was a comment once in *The Indian Social Reformer* to the effect that Gandhi blindly clings to his inner voice and then does not care to think over or even wish to know what other great men think about him." He then politely adds that, if this criticism is justified, it is a matter of regret. He proceeds to quote from famous British writers who say that every public servant must take into account what his critics or opponents say against him and, therefore, he advises me that I ought to read and ponder over the criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant[1] and others. He concludes the letter with an apology for quoting from British writers. I get many such letters, and I like to have them. The correspondent need not have apologized at all. I do not look down upon British writers. I have read the works of many and profited from them. I literally adore some British writers. It is the duty of every humble and sensible man to read

[1] 1847-1933; President of the Theosophical Society; founder of the Central Hindu College, Benares; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

and reflect over adverse criticisms. A man learns more from his critics than from his followers. Hence I think first about how many people disapprove of my views rather than how many approve. And if I do not easily change my views once formulated, one good reason for it is that usually I have already examined with care what is said against them. There is not a single criticism by the learned Mrs. Annie Besant which has escaped my careful consideration. One thing, however, is true. I give prime importance to my inner voice. Opposed to it, even the works of great men have, they ought to have, no weight with me. No other course would be right for a swarajist. If a man does not give the first importance to his inner voice, he will forfeit his humanity and lose all his worth. We should know, to be sure, that everyone does not hear the inner voice. It is heard only by one who is ever devoted to study and is a man of discrimination, humility and faith. I do not neglect to study and am not devoid of discrimination and humility. Faith I certainly have. I strive my best to cultivate self-restraint. I believe, therefore, that I hear the inner voice. Everyone can be what I am and hear the inner voice. The man who hears it has gained the strongest support. He can then examine the words of the greatest of men. He may sometimes err in his judgment, but, when he does so, he admits the error in all humility and expiates for it.

Civil Disobedience

The same correspondent asks me : "If you advise civil disobedience, why don't you, at the same time, advise refusal to submit to the penalty for disobedience?" Such refusal, however, would only lead to anarchy, because there would be nothing "civil" about it. The word "civil" suggests that the order alone is to be disregarded, not the penalty. In any case, there can be no question of refusing to submit to the penalty. Civil disobedience has its source in soul-force. Glorying in his physical might, the tyrant seeks to conquer the world. The man of soul-force hands over his body to the tyrant and keeps his soul free, for no tyrant can do anything to a man's soul. Prahlad offered civil disobedience, but was not scared when thrown from the top of a hill. He even embraced as if it were a friend a red-hot pillar. With a smile on his face, Sudhanva plunged into a cauldron of boiling oil. Joseph, the prophet, preferred to go to jail to obeying wicked orders. A civil resister may not pay a fine, for that would be his voluntary act. Being imprisoned is not a voluntary act, since it is the oppressor who throws him into jail.

A QUESTION INSPIRED BY FEAR

The same correspondent asks: "Supposing as a result of non-co-operation, the British severed their connection with us; how can we be sure, in that case, that India will not be invaded by Afghanistan or some other power? If that happens, we should be where we were."

The question does indeed worry some persons. If it worries many we shall not get swaraj, for those who are afraid of Afghanistan, Japan, or some other country will necessarily prefer to remain under the British umbrella. Swaraj means no more and no less than being free from this fear. If we get the strength to drive out the British, will that same strength not help us to resist Afghanistan or Japan? So long as we have not fully adopted swadeshi we shall remain a prey to fear. The complete adoption of swadeshi is like the virtue of a perfectly faithful wife. Just as no ruffian can cast an evil eye on such a woman, so will none be able to look with a covetous eye at Mother India, attired in self-spun and self-woven clothes. Of what profit will a self-reliant India be to Japan? How can Afghanistan harm India if her sons, Hindus and Muslims, have become united? He alone has reason to be afraid of Japan who does not want to follow swadeshi. He may fear the Afghan who doubts the Muslims' sense of honour. The swarajist should shed all fear.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 10-11-1921

183. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LAHORE

November 10, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi supported the resolution and in doing so made a speech in the course of which he said that while seconding the resolution of congratulations to the Ali Brothers and others, he wished to say that if they wanted to release the Ali Brothers and other non-co-operators from jail within the year, then they should follow the programme of non-violent non-co-operation. The Ali Brothers had sent a message to say that they wished to be released only by the orders of swaraj government. If they wanted to strive for the righting of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs there was only one way to do so. He wished to congratulate the Punjab on its progress but the Province had not made progress sufficient for winning swaraj within the year.

In the first place, the Prince's visit should be totally boycotted. A resolution to that effect had been passed by their Municipal Committee but

attempts were being made to secure a reversal of that resolution, but he firmly hoped that they would not allow themselves to be disgraced. He congratulated the Municipality on its decision. They were not the enemies of the Prince nor did they wish to insult him. He went further and said that if anybody would dare touch a single hair of the Prince, they should be ready to protect him (the Prince) with their lives. That was their duty. But there was also the duty to India. The Prince was coming as a Prince to strengthen the present Government. If they had any sense of humanity or love of country or any regard for the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs, then no matter who came, Prince or no Prince, they should boycott his visit. As he had said once in Poona, even if Gokhale came to strengthen the present Government, they should not offer him welcome. He hoped that the Punjab would offer no welcome to the Prince.

Another matter which had been dealt with by the Municipality was in regard to the Lawrence Statue which had on it the inscription: "Will you be governed by the pen or the sword?" The day had come when none could threaten India. Indians did not want to be frightened by the sword nor influenced by the pen of anyone. He congratulated their Municipality. When their Municipality had resolved on a thing, all men and women should unite. They were no enemies of Lord Lawrence, but they did not like the inscription of the statue to remain. Things in India had changed. India feared none but God. They did not want that statue to remain. They should hold a meeting and say to the Government: "You shall have to remove the statue."[1]

As stated in the resolution, they would follow the Ali Brothers. If the Government wanted to guard the statue with soldiers, British, Sikhs, Gurkhas or Pathans, then the people should say, "We shall die but have it removed." Every man whom the Municipal Committee orders, should be ready to go to remove the statue. It would be better if some women went and faced bayonets and showed readiness to go to jail. He did not believe the present Government was so uncivilized. It would yield. But if Government behaved madly, they should be ready to uphold their honour and suffer in doing so. If the time came, they should show that they did not care for soldiers. During their trial, the Ali Brothers did not leave their chairs when asked to do so but of their own free will they gave up chairs and spread their cloaks on the ground and sat on them. What they wanted was cool courage. No one, however, was to go at night to remove the statue. They should do everything in the open. They should give notice. Some 12 years ago, somebody had gone at night and put a string of shoes round the statue. None should do such a thing.

If they continued non-violent, they would snatch Jazirat-ul-Arab, Smyrna and Thrace and Palestine but if a Hindu, Mohammedan or Sikh committed murder or even uttered abuse, such a man should be regarded as an enemy

[1] *Vide* "The Pen or the Sword", 17-11-1921.

of the nation. They were to be non-violent. They should cultivate courage like Lachhman Singh and Dalip Singh who died as martyrs at Nankana Saheb. The *mahant* on the other hand, was regarded as a murderer. They should learn how to die.

He wished to congratulate the *Zamindar*. First, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan went to Jail, then his son followed him and then the third editor of the paper. Another had stepped in the editor's place and he (the speaker) wished him to go to jail also. He wished women to take the place and suffer. They should not mind what happened under Section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, or the Press Act. He hoped the *Zamindar* would continue till its press was confiscated by the Government.

In conclusion, he wished to remind them that there were three things necessary. First was non-violence; second, Hindu-Muslim unity and third, charkha.

The Tribune, 12-11-1921

184. TEST

The time of Gujarat's test is approaching. It is not a question of months now, but weeks. Soon we shall be counting the days and then only hours.

On the one hand, Gujarat has to make the Congress session a glorious success and see that it is not found wanting in hospitality, practical efficiency and generosity.

On the other hand, Gujarat has to show itself worthy of the honour it won by being the first to declare itself in favour of non-co-operation[1]. It should organize at least one taluka which will be ready, and have the strength, to face death.

I have already given the conditions to be fulfilled for this. It may be said that the All-India Congress Committee has accepted them. These are conditions which can be stated in concrete terms, but we should also pay attention to something else about which no resolution can be passed and yet without which no taluka can fulfil the other conditions. Is it any wonder that a person who has learnt the theorems of geometry merely by rote without understanding them should occasionally commit a howler? What would be his plight if, having memorized a step with "therefore", he says "because"? Just as this person would betray his unintelligent cramming, so will anyone claiming to have fulfilled the All-India

[1] At the Gujarat Political Conference held at Ahmedabad on August 27, 28 and 29, 1920. *Vide* Vol. XVIII.

Congress Committee's conditions without understanding them be able to proceed no further than the gate. On reaching it, he will find that he does not know the secret of opening it.

This struggle, from its very nature, is one of dharma. Call it practical or idealistic, political or social,—no matter by what name it is known—it is rooted in dharma. We are fighting it for the sake of dharma and in the name of dharma. The Ali Brothers put all their cards on the table. "When it is a question of choice between the law of God and the law of the state, between the Koran and the Penal Code, we certainly prefer to obey our Khuda and our holy Koran." This was their attitude. This fight is thus for enabling everyone to understand and follow his own religion, whether Hinduism or Islam, Zoroastrianism or Christianity. Everyone should be ready to lay down his life for his faith. He who gives his life will be saved. He who takes another's life will lose his own. If one could truly follow one's dharma by killing others, lakhs of men would have attained *moksha* by now.

The only course, therefore, in an hour of difficulty is to pray to God. He who lacks such faith in Him will abandon the struggle sooner or later. A counterfeit rupee may pass the hands of a hundred shop-keepers but it will not command better value for that. It is sure to be returned from the banker's counter at last. And all those persons through whose hands it may have passed will have been polluted by its touch, more or less. In the same way, those of us who are counterfeit coins are sure to turn back at the last moment.

The game is for those who enjoy playing it, and the field of battle for those who are ready for the consequences. The invitation is to one and all, but only those who are really hungry may sit at the table. Others may sit, if they like, but they will suffer afterwards from an overfull stomach. One who is not hungry will not relish the sweetest dishes, and a hungry man will feast even on a plain *jowar*[1] *rotla*[2]. Similarly, those alone will stand their ground who have understood the meaning of non-co-operation and the secret of dharma. Everything is plain to the man of understanding, but to one who lacks understanding everything is difficult. What will a mirror avail to a man who is blind?

These are no easy times. Let us not take a hasty step and repent for it afterwards. If no taluka in Gujarat is ready, we may return the *hundi*[3]. But, having once signed it, we must pay the

[1] Millet

[2] A thick, round cake of unleavened bread

[3] A bill of exchange or a draft

amount in full. This is the time for Gujarat to make its choice. Once the choice is made, there can be no retreat. If, in a quixotic spirit of bravado, we accept the challenge now and can do nothing afterwards, we shall be shamed to death. At this stage, however, Gujarat need feel no fear or hesitation.

Let us now see in what our fitness consists:

1. Remaining peaceful
2. Hindu-Muslim unity
3. Swadeshi
4. Removal of untouchability

All this is easy enough.

Civil disobedience? We are not strangers even to that. "The jail", of course, goes with it. Well, we will take it in our stride. So many of the best have been in prison, have had a taste of it. Why, then, cannot we do as much? So this, too, is not difficult.

But . . . ?

If martial law is proclaimed? If the Gurkhas descend upon us? If Tommy Atkins takes over? And then, suppose they spear us, shoot us down and force us to crawl on our bellies? Let them come, by all means. If they order us to crawl? We may die, but not move on our bellies. Supposing they spear us, what then? Instead of dying of the plague, we shall fall to the spear. If they shoot us, we will certainly not turn our backs. We have enough courage now to uncover our chests and receive the bullets as fearlessly as we catch the flying *moi* in *moi-danda*[1]. We should convert Gurkhas into our friends. If they do not respond, what greater joy than dying at our brothers' hands? As we say this, we do feel proud of ourselves.

But how shall we feel while acting?

I do trust that timid Gujarat will rise to the occasion this time. But the pen trembles even as I write this. When has Gujarat had any occasion to hear the thundering of guns? When did it ever see rivers of blood flowing? Can Gujarat stand the sight of guns shooting away like so many crackers bursting and heads being smashed like earthen pots?

If it can see unaffected others' heads being smashed, it will cease to be "Gujarat the Glorious". If it can see its own heads being broken, it will win immortal fame. What is the training required for this?

[1] An Indian game

Faith in oneself. That faith no resolution of the All-India Congress Committee can inspire. God is the protector of the weak. He it is who gives courage. He who enjoys Rama's protection can be harmed by none. Since He is the giver of this physical frame, let Him claim it back. This body cannot be preserved by anything we do. Like the rupee, it should be readily expended in a good cause. And what more glorious occasion to sacrifice it than in the attempt to free ourselves from this tyranny? Anyone who sincerely feels thus will, with a smile on his face uncover his chest and receive the bullets fearlessly as if they were no more than rubber balls.

Only if it has this unshakable faith may any taluka of Gujarat plunge into the battle.

It is not necessary that all must have such faith. I have stated what measure of it will suffice. It does not matter if those who lack this faith do not have the strength to face a hail of bullets. But they must have the grit to refuse to surrender and bend their knees even if their houses are plundered. Let them plunder, if they will. We are bound to return to these very homes, if we survive; if we die in the attempt to recover them, well, that will be swaraj.

If even one taluka does not have this strength, how can we show our firmness for swaraj? But, on the day when one single taluka emerges successful from this test, that day we shall definitely have won swaraj, because on that same day India will have proved its skill in wielding a divine weapon.

And it is not as if we would have displayed any extraordinary strength in doing all this. To act thus is but part of man's nature. The Boer women showed this heroism. Hundreds of thousands of Britons showed it, and Turkish men and women are showing it today.

But there is a difference. These others may kill as well as die. We, however, know that immortality is won only by laying down one's life. Is it in any way difficult to give up the way of killing and learn that of dying? For dying, one requires dauntless courage. The man of faith will have it in the winking of an eye. For killing, one requires strength of body and skill in shooting. One needs to learn, besides, a thousand other evil things before one can become proficient in killing and the end-result is that one earns for oneself the title of a murderer.

But some Hindu will demur and say, "This is all about the Kshatriya spirit. Has not Gujarat been always a stranger to it? We know only trade and commerce." Gujarat may be as

described above, but this cannot be the meaning of Hinduism. Everyone, whatever his caste, should have the qualities of all the four castes. The distinctive quality of one's own may predominate in one, but a person altogether devoid of the qualities associated with castes other than his own is no man. The mother who knows how to die for the sake of her child is a Kshatriya woman, and the husband who gives up his life to save his wife is a Kshatriya. But we do not call such brave persons Kshatriyas, because it is not their profession to protect the world.

At this juncture, it is everyone's dharma to protect India—that is, the world—because this has ceased to be anybody's dharma in particular—so it seems at any rate.

So much about the Hindus. What are the Muslims, Parsis and others in Gujarat expected to do? India is theirs too, and so also Gujarat. It is their dharma as well to free India from her slavery and they can do this only by laying down their lives.

Everyone, therefore, who calls himself an Indian, be he a Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jew, or anyone else, has to learn and master this *mantra* of dying without killing. Only the man who has faith in God can learn it and act on it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-11-1921

185. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SABARMATI,
Tuesday [*November 15, 1921*]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Even a mother will not serve [food] without [the child] asking for it.[1] Unless you shout, you will have no customer for your berries.[2] How will a mother know what the child wants? And the condition of the berry-seller's basket the woman alone knows. If, therefore, you asked for the thing and had it, what is there to be ashamed of?

I got your *bhajans* and have read them. Maybe poetic talent grows during illness, but, in displaying it, do you not delay your recovery? If you refrain from exercising it and even then it shows itself after recovery, it would be worthier of admiration.

[1] & [2] Gujarati sayings

If we regard illness as an opportunity for listening to the promptings of the inner voice [for self-examination] and constantly look within ourselves, that enhances our strength.

I have received a telegram from Motilalji telling me that your health is quite all right.

May God grant you the strength to keep your vows.

May you both be happy and be active in service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 11414

186. LETTER TO A. S. FREEMANTLE

[After *November 15, 1921*]

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter of the 15th instant. I am publishing the correspondence in full in *Young India*—not your letter authorizing publication.

Yours faithfully,

From a photostat: S.N. 7663

187. SPEECH ON BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF RAJCHANDRA, AHMEDABAD

November 16, 1921

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I wish to refresh your memory. You may have forgotten the occasion, but I have not. After my return from England, we had met in the Premabhai Hall in Ahmedabad to celebrate the birth anniversary of this illustrious person. I had said then that, if we continued our disorderly noises, far from adoring the great man to respect whom we had gathered, we would be profaning his name. After this, with some difficulty people were made to keep quiet for a while. Much water has flowed down the Sabarmati river since then. We, too, have gone through many experiences, both sweet and bitter, and have learnt to some extent the lesson of keeping order at meetings. It is one of the simplest rules of civilized behaviour to arrive at a meeting in time and not to leave one's seat

till it ends. If I may say the same thing with reference to our subject today, this rule is the first lesson in the path of compassion.

We must suffer inconvenience ourselves so that others may be comfortable. It is licence, not discipline, to act upon the impulse of the moment without pausing to consider how our action may affect others in the world. Such behaviour argues the Satanic temperament, not the godly. It is the Satanic way to embrace disorder as order. Where it is all noise and no consideration or respect for anyone, it is the Satanic way which the people follow. We cannot point to one specific mark through which we may recognize an action as being Satanic. Every action is prompted by mixed motives. An action which springs from restlessness in the heart and creates the very image of restlessness, should be regarded as characteristic of the Satanic way.

I stand first, these days, in using the word "Satanic". Not that I am enamoured of it. The world may imagine that I am, but my conscience tells me that I am prompted by nothing but compassion in using it. There is no hatred and no anger behind it. I describe things as I see them. In this, I merely follow the way of compassion. Today's occasion is twice welcome as affording an opportunity for reflection over the meaning of compassion.

We revere the person for honouring whose memory we have gathered here. I, too, rank myself among his adorers. A critic can never be this. This is, therefore, not the place for sceptics. Even such persons may attend in a spirit of humility to get their doubts resolved. If, however, the motive is to find food for one's scepticism, the rule of civilized behaviour requires that one should leave this place. Everyone in the world should have freedom. The sceptic should certainly have a place where he can be himself, but likewise the devotee or the worshipper, too, should have a place where he can go ahead with his work undisturbed by criticism. I assume, therefore, that only those who love the poet and hold him in reverence have come to this meeting. It is to these persons that I say that today's occasion is twice welcome.

The man in whose hallowed memory we have gathered here was the living embodiment of this religion of compassion. He understood it well and had perfected it in his life. This same compassion inspires our present activities in the country. It is not anger which prompts them. The situation as it has developed has given us sufficient reason to be angry and has hurt us deeply. But, even at this unhappy hour we pause and think how we may act so as not to hurt the opponents; how, on the contrary, we may do a good turn even to them. Non-co-operation springs from

compassion and not from anger. Afraid that we may be in the wrong, we refuse to be angry with the opponent and, instead, ourselves flee from him.

This certainly leads to serious results. Those persons or institutions against which we employ non-co-operation are indeed hurt by our action, but the religion of compassion does not teach that we may never hurt anyone. That is not the meaning of compassion I have learnt from the Poet. True compassion lies in doing what is good or performing our duty even at the cost of inflicting pain on others through our action.

I have often declared that I have learnt, and learnt much, from the lives of many persons. But it is from the Poet's life that I have learnt most. It was from his life that I understood the way of compassion. There can be no act which will not hurt the feelings of someone or another, but the pain must have been inflicted out of compassion. Two conditions have to be satisfied for this purpose :

1. We can do something which hurts someone only if it hurts us more than it hurts him.

2. Our motive must be absolutely pure. We should have no other thought in our mind than the welfare of the other person.

Let us suppose that my son is a drink-addict and a smoker and is given to dissolute ways. He asked me for some money. Till now I used to give him whatever he asked for, because I was a blind father. From my association with Raychandbhai, however, I learnt that not only should I myself not drink and smoke and live an immoral life, but that I must save others too from these things. It is, therefore, my duty to refuse to give a penny to my son, even to snatch away a wine-glass from his hand if I see him holding one. If I come to know that he keeps his liquors in a particular chest, I must burn it. If I see a wine bottle, I must smash it. The son will certainly be hurt, and he will look upon me as a heartless father. But a father who understands the meaning of compassion is not afraid of hurting his son or of being cursed by him. The way of compassion and benevolence dictates that, in such circumstances, one should snatch away the wine-bottle from the son's hand. I would not do this forcibly but, if I come to know that he keeps his liquor bottle at a particular place in the house, I would seize it from there and smash it.

Raychandbhai suggested an excellent rule of guidance in following this way, that we may not displease others in ordinary matters, may not start reproaching people over trifles in the name of the path of compassion. If we understand this simple rule, many

things, which otherwise puzzle us, we would do out of deference to others. It may be I do not understand why we should wear khadi and am in love with fine muslin; but, then, it happens that in the society in which I live all wear khadi, and we commit no wrong in wearing it. I should, then, follow society. Raychandbhai taught me this simple rule.

Once, in Bombay, we were discussing the path of compassion. The point was whether one may use leather. In the end, we both agreed that we cannot do without leather. Professions like agriculture must go on. However, if we cannot do without it altogether, we should certainly refrain from wearing on the head anything containing leather. I have always been a man who would not miss a chance for a jest. I asked him to examine the cap on his head. He was a man ever wrapped in contemplation and never thought about what he wore and how he covered himself. The fact that there was a leather-strip in his cap had entirely escaped him. But as soon as I pointed it out, he tore the piece off. I don't suppose that my argument was so cogent that it convinced him instantly. He did not argue at all. He simply thought that my motive was good and that I held him in reverence. So why should he enter into an argument with me? All he did was quietly to pull out the leather-strip and I am sure he never again thereafter wore any head-dress containing leather. Even if, however, somebody tells me that he actually saw the Poet wearing such a cap after that, I would not be hurt. If I had occasion to mention the thing to him again, he would have immediately torn off the piece of leather. It might have remained through oversight.

In this lies the greatness of great souls. Such behaviour shows that they are free from egotism. They are ready to learn even from children. It is the characteristic of great men not to mind difference of views in small matters. To those who, in the name of the religion of compassion, always differ with others in every small matter and claim to be guided by the voice of conscience, I would say that they hear no such voice, or that, as in animals, the *atman* in them is not yet awake. This is so with most of us. The difference between man and the brute is that in the former, the *atman* can wake up to the full. If we follow the world in ninety-nine things, in regard to the hundredth thing we may tell it that its way is not right. But how can a man who is at daggers drawn with the world from his birth can act with love for the world?

In most cases, we should behave as though we were inert things. The difference between wholly inert matter and living

matter is practically nil. The entire world seems to be inert matter, the *atman* shines but rarely. Those who live on a higher plane act on this principle. I saw that Raychandbhai did this.

Had he been living today, he would have certainly blessed the present movement. It is based on dharma. No man who is imbued with compassion can but join it. The movement is sure to produce excellent effects in the political, economic and other spheres. But the happiest result will be that it will have saved many persons and made some fit for *moksha.* If we do not discover this by the end of the year, life will become unbearable to me.

Raychandbhai often used to say that he could bear being transfixed with spears, but could not bear being stabbed with the spear of the lies, the hypocrisies and the oppression which prevail in the world and of irreligion masquerading as religion. He was full of indignation over oppression and I often saw him boil over. The whole world was his kith and kin. The grief which we feel at the death of our own brother or sister, he used to experience at the existence of suffering and death in the world. If somebody argued that the people suffered for their own sins, he would ask what drove them to sin. We call the time the Age of Kali when the path of virtue is not easy but lies through hills and valleys. During this Age, virtue is a rare sight in the world and vice flourishes, masquerading as virtue. If, in such a state of affairs, we wish to follow the path of compassion, our hearts must be filled with unendurable pain. Far better, we should feel, that the body should become feeble and perish than that we should go on living in these conditions.

This seems to me the real reason why Raychandbhai died at such an early age. It is true indeed that he suffered from a disease, but the pain he felt at the sight of suffering in the world was unbearable to him. If the physical disease had been the only cause, he could have won the battle against it. But he was troubled with the thought how in these evil times one could realize the *atman.* Such a feeling is an indication of the spirit of compassion.

It is not the height of compassion to avoid killing a bug. True, a bug may not be destroyed, but, at the same time, one should see that one does not permit bugs to breed. Letting them breed is more cruel than destroying them.

All of us let them breed. Jains do that and so do I, a *Vaishnava*[1]. We do not know cleanliness. When we go on adding to our posses-

[1] A worshipper of Vishnu

sions, we do not think of the consequences. What else but breeding [of bugs] can we expect from accumulation of unnecessary things?

It is indeed a form of compassion not to kill insects such as bugs and mosquitoes. But the refusal to kill a human being is the higher form of it. What should we do when we are forced to choose between killing a human being and destroying a bug? Circumstances may possibly arise in which it may be our duty to save a bug at the cost of human life. But the other way about is also possible. I am suggesting a way which will save us from either of these contingencies. This is the true spirit of compassion.

The Poet used to say at times: "Had Jainism not fallen into the hands of those who are called Jains, it would have filled the world with marvel at its truths. The *Vanias*[1] bring discredit on the truths of Jainism. They scatter corn over ant-hills. If any preparation of potato chances to get into their mouth, they feel pricks of conscience. In such small matters, they are ever punctilious. They are welcome to be so, but those who imagine that this is the height of Jainism really stand on the lowest level of dharma. That level is for the fallen, not for the pure in heart." Many Jains, therefore, say that Rajchandra knew nothing about dharma, that he was a hypocrite and an egotist. I know, however, that he had not a trace of hypocrisy and egotism.

Though it is true that bugs and other insects should not be killed, that is not all that the spirit of compassion means. That is only the first step. During some past age, the belief must have come to prevail that there was no sin in destroying insects to save human life. A sage may have then arisen who must have laid stress on protection of insects and proclaimed: "O fool! Do not destroy insects for preserving the transient body. Pray fervently, rather, that it may perish today rather than tomorrow." From this sentiment arose ahimsa.

But the man who beats his wife or child, though he shrinks from killing a tiny bug, is not a Jain, nor a Hindu, nor a *Vaishnava*. He is a cipher. On this sacred day of the Poet's anniversary, let us give up the narrow meaning of compassion and interpret the word in the broadest sense. It is a sin to hurt the feelings of a single person or to regard him as an enemy. Anyone who wants to see General Dyer hanged, or Sir Michael O'Dwyer burnt alive, is neither a Jain, nor a *Vaishnava*, nor a Hindu. He is nobody and nothing. The very essence of ahimsa lies in burning our anger and

[1] Community traditionally engaged in trade and commerce. Most Jains belong to this community.

in cleansing the soul. Who am I to judge General Dyer? I know that I am myself full of ill will. How many persons I may be murdering in my mind! What right have I to judge General Dyer? I have, therefore, resolved not to retaliate if anyone attacks me with a sword. This is the path of compassion and the underlying principle of the non-co-operation movement.

But in my speeches I do not mention the word "compassion". I am talking about it today because this is the anniversary celebration of Srimad Rajchandra. I know that the result of this movement will be to spread the spirit of compassion. When that result follows, people will recognize it by themselves.

There is greater sin in killing a serpent or a tiger in a human form than in killing a real serpent. We kill a tiger out of fear, not in anger. If there really is a Dharmaraja who judges our sins and good deeds, he will perhaps have pity on the person who may have killed a tiger and forgive him, because he will have only followed the natural instinct of the beast in him. One beast will have killed another. But behind the murder of a human being, there is the spirit of revenge and anger, of pride and hypocrisy. Dharmaraja will say: "You fool! What endless scheming and swindling must have preceded the murder!"

I tell Jains, and others too, that compassion does not merely mean not killing bugs, ants and other insects, though certainly they should not be killed. It also means that no soul born as a human being must be cheated. And yet what else do the businessmen do? If any Jain would show his account books to me, I would immediately prove that he was no Jain. How is the cloth in which we trade produced? Dealers ought to consider whether the manufacture of cloth is not tainted, whether it is not true that animal fat is used in sizing cloth. It must be, besides, repugnant to businessmen to charge exhorbitant rates of interest. This is not worthily done by a Jain. Dealers may reasonably add to the cost of an article one pice or two pice for their services. But why all this cunning higgling and lying? And the interest which is charged for money lent is so cruelly high that it kills the debtor. Wherever I go, I hear complaints against *Vanias*, both Jains and *Vaishnavas*. Many whites ask me to see first what excessive rates of interest our own people charge.

We must cease to be unscrupulous *Vanias* and become Kshatriyas. The Vaisya's dharma does not mean doing no manual work, no ploughing, no heroism and no consideration for right and wrong. The true Vaisya, rather, shows himself heroic in his generosity and discrimination in his business; he follows the Brahmin's

dharma, too, by exercising his discrimination and deciding that he may not sell liquor or fish, that he may deal only in pure khadi. We shall fall into sin if others slave for us and we merely lend money and earn interest. At least by way of *yajna*, we should do some bodily labour every day.

Primarily, the *Vania's* sphere is business, but he must also possess the qualities of the other castes. If I should have to engage a Kabuli or a Pathan to protect my wife, it would be better, though I am a Hindu, that I should divorce her and set her free. But what do we find many *Vanias* doing? Most of them have engaged North Indians and Pathans as watchmen. You may do even that; I do not mind it. If, however, you lack the strength to protect your wife and children, you had better retire into a hermit's cottage and live there as befits your dharma. It will not, then, be your duty, as *Vanias*, to come forward to protect the world. The Kshatriyas will do that whenever and wherever they find people suffering.

The biggest lesson I learnt from Rajchandrabhai's life is that a *Vania* should always live as befits a *Vania*. At present *Vanias* are not true *Vanias*. It is not necessary, for becoming true *Vanias*, to be a great pundit or read bulky volumes. Anyone who does not let himself be defiled, who observes the rules of *yama*[1] and *niyama*[2], who keeps away from untruth and takes care never to do anything contrary to dharma, who has not a trace of lust in his heart and is full of the spirit of compassion, such a person will be fit for the Absolute state; the realization of that state will not be beyond his reach. That is why I do not ask you to learn Sanskrit or to read the *Bhagavati-sutra*. Whether or not you read it, I am indifferent in the matter.

As early as when the anniversary was celebrated in Wadhwan, it was resolved that a library with the name of "Rajchandra Pustakalaya" should be started. There was a proposal for constructing a special building for it. I did not, at that time, show much enthusiasm for the idea. I told the people that, without a soul, the building would be a mere structure of brick and mortar. Today the three-year-old resolve has borne fruit. The circumstances are favourable. We have a worthy man like Jinavijayji to help us. The library of the Puratattva Mandir has also been amalgamated [with this]. Its benefit will be freely available to whosoever takes the trouble to go there.

[1] & [2] Rules of moral and ethical discipline and external religious observances

Please carry home with you what you heard here today and translate it into practice in your life. You may leave here what seemed to you questionable, but forthwith start acting upon whatever you found acceptable, what pleased your ears and your heart.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1921

188. MESSAGE FOR PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY

Before *November 17, 1921*

I am sorry that I cannot personally come to Bombay this time even for a day.[1] But I hope that you will excuse me when you know that the work which has detained me here is of greater importance than the worthy task before Bombay.

If you wish to bring glory to Bombay:

1. Not even a child should attend any celebration arranged in honour of the Prince of Wales;

2. No one, young or old, should attend any entertainment programme even if admission to it is free—there are many other days for such things.

3. No man or woman should stir out of the house at all on the 17th without some unavoidable work.

4. Even by mistake one should not go out of curiosity to see what is happening, in the direction of the place where a celebration in honour of the Prince has been arranged.

5. Everyone should stay at home and spin and, if one does not know spinning, concentrate on it for eight hours and learn it from someone.

6. Everyone should spend some time at any rate in singing devotional songs or in prayer. Let city-dwellers not think that God does not exist, or that, even if He exists, it is not necessary to remember Him or seek His help in national work.

7. At the very hour when the Prince will be landing, a bonfire of foreign cloth should be lighted on the open ground by the side of the Elphinstone Road. For this purpose, we should start collecting foreign cloth in such parts of the city from which we have not collected any so far.

8. If the trains, etc., are running, no passenger should be forcibly dragged out.

[1] He was, however, persuaded to come. *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay, 17-11-1921.

9. Workers must not stop work without obtaining prior leave.

10. We can be fit for swaraj only if everyone is free to do what he chooses in every matter.

Please remember:

Our reason for not joining functions in honour of the Prince is not that we have anything against him personally. He has done us no harm. The reason is that the bureaucracy is using him for its own purposes and that we do not wish to help it in this. It is as much our duty, therefore, to ensure the safety of his person, to refrain from so much as a suggestion of insult to him, as to boycott all functions in his honour.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 20-11-1921

189. LETTER TO HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI

[Before *November 17, 1921*][1]

BHAISHRI AHMED HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI,

I send with this the draft of the Resolution. If you wish to make any changes, you may do so. Please read my suggestions given in *Young India*. It would be advisable to have the appeal signed by some eminent Maulana and get it distributed at all places. We shall succeed only if we maintain on the 17th perfect peace in the whole of India. If from today up to the 17th we work hard enough, I am sure that on the 17th all business will be suspended and peace maintained. We shall succeed in this matter only if we strictly adhere to the truth. It is necessary that leaders say the same thing in public as in private.

HAJI SIDDIK KHATRI
HILAL MANZIL
85, ABDUL REHMAN STREET

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 6162

[1] The letter was written in connection with the demonstrations on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales who was to arrive in Bombay on November 17.

190. *NOTES*

My Inconsistency

A correspondent asks some pertinent questions in the following pungent fashion:

> When the Zulus broke out for liberty against the British usurpers, you helped the British in suppressing the so-called rebellion. Is it a rebellion to try to shake off the foreign yoke? Was Joan of Arc a rebel? Was George Washington a rebel? Is De Valera one? You may say that the Zulus had recourse to violence. I then ask, was the end bad or the means? The latter may have been so but certainly not the former; so you will be kind enough to explain the riddle. In the last War, when the gallant Germans and Austrians were fighting so bravely against a world combination, you raised recruits for the British to fight against the nations that had done India no harm. Whenever there is a war between two races, one has to hear both parties before coming to a decision, either for or against any of them. In the last war we had a one-sided version only and that from a nation certainly not renowned for truthfulness or honesty. You have all along been an advocate of passive resistance and non-violence. Why then did you induce people to take part in a war the merits of which they knew not, and for the aggrandizement of a race so miserably wallowing in the mire of imperialism? You may say you had faith in the British bureaucracy. Is it possible for any person to have faith in an alien people all whose acts have run so glaringly counter to their promises? It cannot have been so with a person of such high attainments as yourself. So you will please answer the second riddle.
>
> There is another point to which I should like to refer. You are an advocate of non-violence. Under the present circumstances we should be strictly non-violent. But when India will be free, should we strictly eschew arms even if a foreign nation invaded us? Would you also boycott railways and telegraphs and steamers even when they will have ceased to promote exports of the products of our soil?

I hear and read many charges of inconsistency about myself. But I do not answer them as they do not affect anyone but myself. The questions however raised by the correspondent are of general importance and deserve notice. They are by no means new to me. But I do not remember having answered them in the columns of *Young India*.

WHY DID I ASSIST IN WAR

Not only did I offer my services at the time of the Zulu revolt[1] but before that at the time of the Boer War[2], and not only did I raise recruits in India during the late War[3], but I raised an ambulance corps in 1914 in London[4]. If therefore I have sinned, the cup of my sins is full to the brim. I lost no occasion of serving the Government at all times. Two questions presented themselves to me during all those crises. What was my duty as a citizen of the empire as I then believed myself to be, and what was my duty as an out and out believer in the religion of ahimsa—non-violence?

I know now, that I was wrong in thinking that I was a citizen of the empire. But on those four occasions I did honestly believe that in spite of the many disabilities that my country was labouring under, it was making its way towards freedom, and that on the whole the Government from the popular standpoint was not wholly bad and that the British administrators were honest though insular and dense. Holding that view, I set about doing what an ordinary Englishman would do in the circumstances. I was not wise or important enough to take independent action. I had no business to judge or scrutinize ministerial decisions with the solemnity of a tribunal. I did not impute malice to the ministers either at the time of the Boer War, the Zulu revolt or the late War. I did not consider Englishmen nor do I now consider them as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them to be as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes. I therefore felt, that I sufficiently discharged my duty as a man and a citizen by offering my humble services to the empire in the hour of its need whether local or general. That is how I would expect every Indian to act by his country under swaraj. I would be deeply distressed, if on every conceivable occasion every one of us were to be a law unto oneself and to scrutinize in golden scales every action of our future national assembly. I would surrender my judgment in most matters to national representatives, taking particular care in making my choice of such representatives. I know that in no other manner would a democratic government be possible for one single day.

[1] *Vide* Vol. V, pp. 291-3, 361-2 & 368-73.

[2] *Vide* Vol. III, pp. 129 & 137-41 and Vol. IV, pp. 295-6.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XIV.

[4] *Vide* Vol. XII, pp. 527-8 & 533-6.

The whole situation is now changed for me. My eyes, I fancy, are opened. Experience has made me wiser. I consider the existing system of Government to be wholly bad and requiring special national effort to end or mend it. It does not possess within itself any capacity for self-improvement. That I still believe many English administrators to be honest does not assist me, because I consider them to be as blind and deluded as I was myself. Therefore I can take no pride in calling the empire mine or describing myself as a citizen. On the contrary, I fully realize that I am a pariah untouchable of the empire. I must therefore constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction, even as a Hindu pariah would be fully justified in so praying about Hinduism or Hindu society.

The next point, that of ahimsa, is more abstruse. My conception of ahimsa impels me always to dissociate myself from almost everyone of the activities I am engaged in. My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces, but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucifixion of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free.

More Cases in Point

I was again an ordinary citizen no wiser than my fellows, myself believing in ahimsa and the rest not believing in it at all but refusing to do their duty of assisting the Government because they were actuated by anger and malice. They were refusing out of their ignorance and weakness. As a fellow-worker, it became my duty to guide them aright. I therefore placed before them their clear duty, explained the doctrine of ahimsa to them and let them make their choice which they did. I do not repent of my action in terms of ahimsa. For under swaraj too I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country.

What of the Future?

That brings me to the second question. Under swaraj of my dream there is no necessity for arms at all. But I do not expect

that dream to materialize in its fullness as a result of the present effort, first because the effort is not directed to that end as an immediate goal and secondly because I do not consider myself advanced enough to be able to prescribe a detailed course of conduct to the nation for such preparation. I am still myself too full of passion and other frailties of human nature to feel the call or the capacity. All I claim for myself is, that I am incessantly trying to overcome every one of my weaknesses. I have attained great capacity, I believe, for suppressing and curbing my senses, but I have not become incapable of sin, i.e., of being acted upon by my senses. I believe it to be possible for every human being to attain that blessed and indescribable sinless state in which he feels within himself the presence of God to the exclusion of everything else. It is, I must confess, as yet a distant scene. And therefore, it is not possible for me to show the nation a present way to complete non-violence in practice.

Railways and Telegraphs

The question about railways and telegraphs is really too insignificant in relation to the great doctrine I have just discussed. I am not myself banishing the personal use of these conveniences myself. I certainly do not expect the nation to discard their use nor do I expect their disuse under swaraj. But I do expect the nation under swaraj not to believe that these agencies necessarily advance our moral growth or are indispensable for our material progress. I would advise the nation to make a limited use of these agencies and not to be feverishly anxious to connect seven hundred fifty thousand villages of India by telegraph and railways. The nation, when it feels the glow of freedom, will realize that they were needed by our rulers more for our enslavement than for enlightenment. Progress is a lame woman. It can only come hopping. You cannot send it by wire or rail.

Fallen Sisters

The reader will be glad to learn that the work of reclaiming the fallen sisters of Barisal has been taken up in right earnest. Dr. Roy writes, saying that many of them have been visited, and spinning is being introduced among them. Jagadish Babu who has been in charge of Babu Ashvinikumar Dutt's school for years has promised to guide the young workers who have undertaken this responsible service. I hope that those who have taken up this much-needed service will not leave it half-finished. They must be prepared for disappointments, they must expect slow progress. It is only in such work that is free from excitement or im-

mediate promise of renown that one's love of service for its own sake is tested. I commend the example of Barisal to the other cities also. This purifying work has to be done even after swaraj. Not everyone is qualified for it. Those therefore who feel the call and have the requisite purity should turn their attention to the eradication of this growing vice. The movement naturally has two branches, the reclamation of fallen sisters and the weaning of men from the degrading vice which makes man look upon his sister with lust and tempts him to make her a prey to it. The qualities required for both the branches of work are the same, and the work should be simultaneously done in both the branches if it is to bear fruit.

Influence of an Imprisonment

In the same letter in which he describes the work among the fallen sisters of Barisal, Dr. Roy writes as follows:

> East Bengal is indebted to Pir Badshah Mian's arrest for the Hindu-Muslim unity which is now quite firm and boycott of foreign cloth which is now almost complete among the masses.

Evidence of this character is pouring in from every direction. We must not however rest on our oars. There is still much work to be done. Both the unity and the boycott are tender plants requiring protection and careful watering. The Hindu-Muslim unity must be sustained by each seeking every occasion to serve the other in a silent unostentatious manner. Boycott of foreign cloth can be perpetuated only by the universal adoption of hand-spinning, and every cottage spinning the health-giving music of the wheel. Every group of villages must have an expert who will insist upon the yarn improving in strength, evenness and then fineness. There are enough weavers in India if we can supply them with hand-spun yarn that can be woven just as well as mill-spun yarn. This one act will bring down prices of Indian mill-woven cloth as nothing else will.

A Mystic's Praise of Spinning

A friend sends me the following from George Macdonald's *The Prince and Curdie* on hand-spinning:

> As he hesitated, he heard the noise of a spinning-wheel. He knew it at once, because his mother's spinning-wheel had been his governess long ago, and still taught him things. It was the spinning-wheel that first taught him to make verses, and to sing, and to think whether all was right inside him; or at least it had helped him in all these things. Hence it was no wonder he should know a spinning-wheel when he heard it sing.

The Chittagong Outrage[1]

In reply to my wire[2] Prasanna Babu has sent the further details which I give below:

> Though the people were strictly non-violent and the Gurkhas fell upon them and assaulted them, the bureaucracy have devised noble means of saving their necks by issuing notices under Sec. 144 upon leaders, volunteers, and outsiders indiscriminately, prohibiting them from forming and joining in processions in public streets on the ground that the people who formed the procession on the 20th instant pelted the police and did other violent acts. Such notices were issued on the 27th instant, wherein it is alleged that the Magistrate came to know of the procession and the injuries done to the police by the people only on the 25th from the report of the Police Superintendent.
>
> They have also managed to institute a false case under Sec. 144 and 147 I.P. Code against Maulvi Mahomed Kajimali, President, Khilafat Committee, Kalishankar Chakravarti, Editor *Jyoti* (the local vernacular daily), Premananda Datta, Suhkhendubikas Sen, and Mahomed Sirajulhaque, volunteers, yesterday. All the five accused were arrested and except the second and the fifth accused who have come out on bail, the rest have preferred *hajat.* Premananda Datta was at Dacca on the 20th, still he has been brought on the record as an accused.
>
> The people are calmly working out the Congress programme. Hardly anyone is seen in the street with foreign cloth on. We may assure you that the boycott movement is a success here.

This studied attempt to throttle the movement is bound to fail. The non-official commission referred to in the previous notice of the outrage has acted with the greatest promptness and already issued its report, which bears out the facts as stated by the local Congress secretary. The report shows that at least 104 persons were "hit and wounded". Among these was a nine-year-old boy and at least one lady whose protestation that she belonged to the female sex availed nothing. Some of the wounds were of a serious nature.

Brave Students

Whilst the All-India Congress Committee was in session, the following interesting telegram was received from the brave medical students of Vizagapatam who, it will be remembered, have been dismissed from their college for their effrontery to wear khadi:

[1] *Vide* "Another Gurkha Charge", 3-11-1921.

[2] Not available

Thirty nine medical students, Vizagapatam recently dismissed for wearing khadi caps offer their respectful *pranams*[1] on eve this eventful Congress Committee session which must decide question of swaraj by December. Response Mother's call resolved suspend education during period struggle join national service. Therefore organized ourselves into Sevasamiti Ramadandu carrying swadeshi propaganda to very doors. Been so far self-reliant for funds. Assure you Congress Committee our loyalty our humble services in swaraj cause. Prepared share hardships future struggle. Awaiting your instructions and help through our President Sundarrao or Barrister Prakasham.

I commend this wire to the attention of every student. These young men have shown themselves self-respecting by wearing khadi caps and bravely suffering for the sake of self-respect, and patriotic by devoting their time to national service.[2] This country is suffering from the chronic disease of slavery. Those who spend themselves in finding and applying the true remedy for that disease become true surgeons and physicians, and when that universal disease is cured, most of the other diseases will disappear without further application, and the country will be better prepared to train medical men and women in order to treat the rest.

Feudatory States

The All-India Congress Committee having defined the Congress policy regarding foreign states, the demand was naturally made to define its policy towards our own states. The broad outlines of Congress policy were formulated by the Congress at the Nagpur session, namely of non-intervention in the internal affairs of these states. The states themselves could not wish for anything better or more unequivocal. And the All-India Congress Committee can only define the policy within the four corners of that resolution. Strictly in accord with that resolution, Congress workers have refrained from taking the message of non-co-operation to the states, except its permanent, purifying or economic parts which would hold good even without non-co-operation. These are the drink evil, swadeshi, Hindu-Muslim unity, non-violence and untouchability. The Congress can have nothing but goodwill towards these states, so long as their subjects are well treated. And even when they are ill-treated, the Congress cannot and will not exercise any pressure or force save that of public opinion. And therefore nationalist organs do not hesitate to discuss, when necessary,

[1] Salutations

[2] *Vide* also "Notes", 24-11-1921, under sub-title "More About Medical Students".

in strong language the grievances of the subjects in some of these states. The thoughtless and wanton ill-treatment, for instance, of Sheth Jamnalalji and his party in the confines of Bikaner State whilst they were prosecuting merely their campaign of swadeshi has justly evoked hostile criticism. The liberal States may therefore look for every encouragement from the Congress, and the reactionary ones at the most fierce criticism of their methods and measures. Moreover the Congress cannot but sympathize with the States in their humiliating plight. The imperial power has used them as pawns in its game of exploitation. They are least able to resist the illegitimate and insidious pressure that is brought to bear upon them from time to time. They must therefore realize that the increase of people's power means decrease of the humiliating influence described by me.

FROM ACROSS THE OCEAN

How the Karachi prosecutions have been appreciated even beyond the seas will appear from the following cable just received from Mr. Aswat, Chairman of the Transvaal British Indian Association:

> Convey community's heartiest congratulations families Ali Brothers Dr. Kitchlew and others for the cause of the Motherland. We pray to God to crown the movement with success.

I have only printed one out of many such telegrams or letters received from our countrymen living outside India.

Our countrymen in America too are actively helping the country's cause. Two cablegrams have been received of late from New York. I reproduce the latest:

> Greetings from one thousand Americans open air meeting. We wish civil disobedience programme a success.

To all the young students and others living in the far West I would like to say one word. They would best serve the country by interpreting the movement as it is and in terms of the East instead of seeking to find Western parallels and giving it a Western colour. It is my conviction that in its present form it has no parallel. It is Eastern, better still Indian in conception and peculiarly suited to the Indian soil. It is too early to say how the West with its modern rush will receive it when it has taken deep root enough to spread its branches to the West. As yet it is still in its infancy and often appears in a Western setting. It has unfortunately to be confessed that it still appears and commends itself to many only in its destructive form. Whilst the latter is absolutely essential, it is

the constructive which is the permanent and the best part of it. I am painfully conscious of the fact that to many it appears only to be a preparation for violence, whereas non-violence is not only an integral but the only sustaining part of non-co-operation. It is by itself the largest part of construction. Non-violence at once makes it a religious movement and throws man on God as his only Rock and Refuge. By non-violence the non-co-operator burns his boats and makes steady headway in all weathers. By non-violence the non-co-operator appears before his Maker in his nakedness and commands divine help. He may not appear before Him with his Bible or the Koran or Gita in the one hand and his gun in the other. He appears on the contrary with hands folded, a humble suppliant before the great white Throne. Let the young men abroad understand the essential part of the movement and then attempt to interpret it to the West. Help thus intelligently given will, they will find, bear far richer results than what they have achieved already.

New Features of the Congress

The ensuing Congress is expected to present several new features. Addresses by distinguished men irrespective of political profession on their special subjects is one. The second is a musical concert in which musicians of all India are invited to take part. It is being arranged by Mr. N. M. Khare of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. I trust that there will be a general response from the country. Secretaries of provincial and district Congress committees can assist the enterprise. Some artists may not even see the Congress notices. Indian music of the best type is a decaying art for want of encouragement. We little know the wonderful results that the simple musical instruments of India yield. Somehow or other we have come to labour under the delusion that nothing that does not cost much money or does not come from the West has any real art or value in it. The coming concert is intended from the Congress platform to disabuse the popular mind of the fallacy. There will be in connection with the concert an exhibition of Indian musical instruments. I hope that lovers of Indian music will assist Mr. Khare by corresponding with him at the earliest possible time. Needless to say only those who are at the top of the profession should be invited by the Congress officials to send in their names.

The Bar Sinister

I believe in God working through us and for or against individuals and nations as surely as I believe in the sun rising regular-

ly at the appointed hour from day to day. When therefore I hear that a particular school debars untouchables from attendance, a shudder runs through me and I know that we are not yet fit for swaraj. A letter from the Madras Presidency lies before me, complaining that the head master of a school even instigated his boys against the pending admission of a *Panchama* boy. I am hoping that such unthinkable prejudice is fast becoming a thing of rare occurrence. I have no manner of doubt, that if we seem yet to be far from swaraj, it is because of our weaknesses and our not having carried out the self-imposed conditions, one of the greatest of which is the removal of the bar sinister against one sixth of our countrymen. The Congress workers should realize the necessity of conducting a vigorous campaign against it. It need not in any way interfere with their swadeshi work, for the simple reason that intensive swadeshi work itself is one of the most potent influences in favour of our suppressed countrymen. India cannot be self-contained if the message of the spinning-wheel does not enter the homes of these, the most helpless of our fellow-countrymen. And the message cannot be delivered to them unless we think of them as our blood-brothers and sisters requiring all the gentleness and love we can give them.

Dera Ismailkhan

The secretary of the District Congress Committee of Dera Ismailkhan writes, saying that Messrs Pairakhan, Devidas, Nirmaldas, Kishanchand Bhatia, Haji Ahmed Din, Allah Baksh and Mahomed Ramzan were required to file security because they had repeated the Karachi Resolution. They having refused to give security were convicted to two years' simple imprisonment. The secretary adds that the trial was farcical and lasted only two hours. Lala Pairakhan is a member of the All-India Congress Committee. He was for fifteen years in Government service in Baluchistan, but left it after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and joined the Congress of which he was local secretary when he was arrested. The correspondent says that these convictions took place before judgment in the Karachi case. What however is more puzzling is, that while those who repeated the Resolution at Bombay and led the way are left untouched, those who followed the signatories to the Bombay Manifesto have been imprisoned. I congratulate the more fortunate men of Dera Ismailkhan.

The Koran Taken Away

The secretary of the District Khilafat Committee, Mirpurkhas writes to say that Maulvi Abdul Karim Saheb who was

recently convicted and is serving imprisonment in the Hyderabad jail has been deprived of the Koran. Is it because the Maulvi is comparatively unknown that the Koran has been taken away from him and not from the distinguished prisoners of Karachi? It is this kind of thoughtless and unnecessary persecution that breeds ill will which it is difficult to check. No one minds a fair fight, but the deprivation of his religious book from a prisoner is the extreme of meanness.

Prejudice and Insolence

A correspondent from the Tanjore District writes, saying that he and his brother though Brahmins felt that rather than lead a lazy life, they should do some work and they "turned their hands to the plough." So they began agriculture. Thereupon their fellow-villagers became disgusted and excommunicated them. They however remained firm in their resolve. When the Shankaracharya of Kumbakonam visited their part of the District, they went with their offering which was rejected because they had committed the sin of labouring for their livelihood. My correspondent tells me he is not at all put out by the Shankaracharya's action. I congratulate the brothers on their public spirit. Excommunication from a tyrannical society is indeed a reward of merit and should be welcomed. To say that a Brahmin should not touch the plough is a parody of *varnashrama* and a prostitution of the meaning of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Surely the qualities predominantly ascribed to the different divisions are not denied to the others. Is bravery to be the prerogative only of the Kshatriya and restraint only of the Brahmin? Are Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Sudras not to protect the cow? Can anyone remain a Hindu without readiness to die for the cow? Yet strangely enough, I have a letter from the Madras Presidency seriously telling me, that cow-protection has nothing to do with any but the Vaisyas. When there is so much ignorance combined with insolence, the best thing to do is to incur all risks and pursue the path of reform expecting time to prove the truth of one's position. If we combine love with firmness, we shall disarm all opposition in the end. Reformers may neither relent nor become angry.

Khadi in Theatres

A correspondent suggests, that if all the theatres at Bombay and elsewhere only adopted khadi for their costumes, the use of khadi would become still more fashionable than it is already. The idea is certainly good. But its enforcement largely depends upon

the audience. If the spectators were to insist upon khadi dresses, the proprietors will be compelled to adopt them. They have as a rule no taste save what the public imposes upon them. The best way to enforce the adoption of khadi dresses in theatres is for the regular theatre-goers to ask for khadi costumes. They will have to see to it, that no sham khadi creeps in by stealth. For in theatres more than elsewhere truth is likely to be sacrificed to so-called art or taste. The audience, I suppose, will insist on colours and gaudiness. And whilst it is perfectly possible to have a subdued and beautiful blending of colours on khadi and to have a certain amount of ornamentation about it, the thick variety—and that is the only thing that requires to be made popular—does not lend itself to fantastic combinations without giving rise to positive ugliness. The adoption of khadi on a large scale in theatres therefore means a revolution in public taste and return to simplicity and natural beauty. Our theatres of today are no test of national morals or national taste as in other countries. They are an answer to morbid tastes and an unnatural, unassimilable growth in the nation. Any enterprising manager who recognizing the progressive improvement in public taste will make radical changes in his scenery and costumes will certainly deserve the thanks of the theatre-going public.

An Ingenious Suggestion

The interest that is being taken in the khadi movement all over India is really remarkable. The suggestion about popularizing khadi through the theatres comes from a Poona graduate. A Punjab correspondent bases this upon his experience of the Punjab. The winter in the Punjab is probably the severest in India, and one of the most popular ways adopted to keep up the warmth of the body is by wearing cotton-padded garments and by using cotton-padded blankets. They really give greater warmth to the body even than woollen vests and woollen rugs. But the cotton clothing gets indescribably dirty after a time. What the correspondent suggests is that these garments or the cotton inside them should be renewed every winter. The blankets lend themselves to renewal in the easiest manner. So what he says is that the cotton used for padding should be recarded and spun for manufacturing khadi. The first covers if they are foreign must naturally be destroyed, and one need not go into the merits of destruction for justifying the burning of these things which have gathered dirt in many cases for years. But after the covers are made of khadi, they can be used for summer wear after removing

the padding. And for the winter following, according to the correspondent's suggestion, new cotton should be purchased. For an industrious home the suggestion is really fine, and for the poor most economical. For there is no waste and cleanliness is ensured. If the poor people will but learn the necessary simple tailoring, they can have warm or cool health-giving clothing from year to year to suit the different seasons without much cost. If the whole thing is managed judiciously, the reader will observe that a family can be clothed and covered by purchasing a certain quantity of cotton from year to year and at the most paying the family weaver for weaving. The cost of carding and spinning and tailoring is saved. These things can be attended to without difficulty during leisure hours and without encroaching upon the hours required for recreation, or, as the late Lord Kelvin used to say of himself, recreation might be had from change of occupation. But I know the Punjabi as well as I know the Gujarati. And I know that he has ample time at his disposal for attending to his sartorial requirements. But to carry out the correspondent's wise suggestion necessitates a transformation in national habits. Who can deny that it is needed if the nation is no longer to live in a penurious state? As Mr. Andrews has very properly pointed out in his two articles[1], the economics of the Torrid Zone cannot be the same as of the Temperate. To make India industrial by concentrating labour in one place is to kill the nation. To make India industrious by providing healthy and necessary supplementary occupation in the cottage is to make India healthy, wealthy and therefore happy and contented.

Young India, 17-11-1921

191. *THE PEN OR THE SWORD*

In Lahore on the Mall there is a statue of John Lawrence with a defiant look in the face with the pen in the right hand and the sword in the left. The writing underneath is, "Will you have the pen or the sword?" As a work of art it is said to be very good. But it has always been a matter of offence to the citizens of Lahore. They neither want the pen nor the sword imposed upon them.

The statue is municipal property. It was put up in the early eighties when the sense of self-respect was not so keen as now,

[1] Entitled "Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving" in *Young India*, 3-11-1921 and 10-11-1921

though I understand that even when it was put up, some of the citizens keenly felt the indignity. Recently the Lahore Municipality passed a resolution by a majority vote ordering removal of the statue to the Town Hall building pending final disposal. The resolution was sent in due course to the Government as all resolutions are. Three or four days after, an engineer was sent by the Municipality to see how the statue could be removed. Without any notice to the Municipality, the Deputy Commissioner sent a party of police to turn away the engineer and his men. And when the Municipality wanted to know why and how this undue interference took place, the Commissioner issued the following order[1]. . .

It is clear that the Deputy Commissioner was guilty of assault in having sent the police to turn out the engineer who was doing his legal duty. The Commissioner's order is an illustration of the meaning of the pen. The Commissioner's pen is just as much an outrage as the Deputy Commissioner's sword. The Commissioner, because he has the sword, has arrogated to himself judicial powers which do not belong to him. Whether the Municipality has or has not the power to dispose of its own property is purely for a court of law to decide. And what right has the Commissioner to impute malice to the Municipality? The fact is that the Commissioner cannot tolerate the disappearance from a fashionable quarter of Lahore of the spirit that the statue represents. So he has not hesitated to dictate the law to the Municipality.

Thus what was but an ordinary incident in the affairs of a Municipality which has responded to the new awakening has become a matter of the highest public importance. The citizens, the ratepayers of Lahore must by public meetings support the councillors who have been instrumental in passing the resolution. The councillors must take prompt action and give notice, if they have not already done so, that unless Government show good reason to the contrary, the Municipality must do its duty and remove the statue.

The Commissioner has unintentionally given a golden opportunity to the civil resisters of Lahore to try civil resistance in the cleanest and the most intensive manner. If the Government defy the Municipality and use its brute force to prevent removal of the statue, the civil resisters can, after due notice to the Government, proceed to the site with the intention of removing the statue and

[1] Not reproduced here; it suspended the execution of the Municipality's resolution.

offer themselves for arrest or being shot if the Government so wishes.

But this last step can only be taken by disciplined people. It can only be taken when Lahorians are ready to act as one man. There should be no crowds gathering. Only a few individuals can go at a time, say five, of whom one will become the spokesman. They must not bluster, must not argue but simply court arrest. For the immediate object would be not the removal of the statue but inviting arrest. Removal must be the result, if enough men and women offer themselves as sacrifice. There must be a perfect spirit of non-violence prevailing among the people in order to ensure the success of such civil disobedience. Whilst I point out the drastic remedy of civil disobedience, I must warn the citizens of Lahore against adopting the advice without the greatest delibertion. My own experience of a Lahore crowd is that it does not think. It knows no discipline. The volunteers must work methodically amongst the people to create an atmosphere of peace and discipline. I was grieved to notice, that at the Convocation meeting organized on the 9th instant by the National Board of Education several people had entered Bradlaugh Hall without tickets and without permission. This is not merely uncivil but criminal disobedience. For they entered by force where they knew their force would not be resisted by force. Such men are unfit for civil disobedience which presupposes a scrupulous and willing observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense. Obedience to laws of voluntary associations as the rule of the managers of the Convocation is only the first step to voluntary and ungrudging obedience to the laws imposed by the state. Thoughtless disobedience means disruption of society. The first thing therefore for those who aspire after civil disobedience is to learn the art of willingly obeying laws of voluntary associations such as congresses, conferences and other bodies and similarly obeying the state laws whether they like them or not. Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness and licence, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint.

Young India, 17-11-1921

192. *WHAT IS ABUSE?*

A correspondent from the United Provinces writes:

> Now-a-days the atmosphere is surcharged with clamorous denunciations against the Government. . . . Practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations. . . .
>
> I for my part heartily abhor this evil. . . .
>
> Violence, to me, does not mean actually assaulting and killing others, but covers also bad language. If so, I cannot see how to justify your own use of the epithets, "Satanic", "devilish" and "barbarous" for the Government. There is not the least shadow of doubt that these words come under violence, but that you being the apostle of non-violence utter violence is even in dream unimaginable.
>
> So much for abusive language. Now I take up another question. You always say that you and your followers have arrayed yourselves against the English Government, and not against Englishmen. While you hate the system and want either to mend it or end it, you have absolutely no ill feeling towards Englishmen themselves. Clearly therefore, though you want to do away with the system, you do not desire to expel the English. If so, even those who claim to be your true followers have not fully imbibed this high principle. I may substantiate this with a typical instance. In the U.P. Political Conference recently held at Agra, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while advocating the boycott of foreign cloth, said that if there were any who earnestly desired to expel the English from India, he was one of them, and the means he had found for achieving this was only swadeshi. This has appeared in the Press, and I think you might have read it. Now can Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru be said to have understood your doctrine which makes us differentiate between a man and his action, so as to make it quite possible for us to condemn the man's action without bearing any ill will towards him? Here at least I can emphatically say, that Nehruji's words can be justified in no case, but still I want to know whether you approve or disapprove of them.[1]

In so far as non-co-operators indulge in abuse, it is undoubtedly violence, and a breach of the pledge of non-violence. But I must dissent from the opinion that "practically every speech is a mere list of invectives and imprecations." I assure the writer that the speeches are as full of invectives against ourselves as against

[1] For Jawaharlal Nehru's reply, *vide* "Notes", 8-12-1921, under the subtitle "Men and Measures".

the Government, and they are more full of argument in favour of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and swadeshi than of invectives. The best proof of my statement perhaps is that the people have made such wonderful response in all these three matters. Surely the people have not made the progress without having been effectively appealed to.

But after all what is abuse? I find that the dictionary meaning is "misuse, perversion, bad use". When therefore we call a thief or a rogue a rogue, we do not abuse him. A leper takes no offence being described as such. Only the man using a particular adjective must mean it and be prepared to prove it. I am therefore unable to condemn the use of adjectives in every case and on every occasion, nor is the use of condemnatory adjectives always a sign of violence. I am fully aware, that the use of even deserved adjectives may be a sign of violence as it would be when it is used to excite violence against the person condemned. Condemnation is legitimately used when it is employed to wean the person from his bad habit or the audience from association with him. The Hindu Shastras are full of condemnation of evil-doers. They have pronounced curses upon them. Tulsidas who was the quality of mercy personified has filled the *Ramayana* with adjectives against the enemies of Rama which it would be difficult to excel. Indeed the names themselves chosen for the evil-doers are significant of their qualities. Jesus did not hesitate to draw down divine wrath upon those whom he called "a generation of vipers, hypocrites, whited sepulchres". Buddha did not spare those who killed the innocent goats in the name of religion. Nor are the Koran or the Zend-Avesta free from such use. Only all these seers and prophets had no evil intention in them. They had to describe persons and things as they were and resort to language so as to enable us to make our choice between good and evil. Having said this much, I am at one with the writer that the more sparing we are in describing the Government or the Governors, the better it is for us. There is too much passion and too much evil in ourselves to warrant the constant use of offensive language. The best use we can make of this Government is to ignore its existence and to isolate it as much as possible from our life, believing that contact with it is corrupting and degrading.

I have said repeatedly, that this movement is not intended to drive out the English, it is intended to end or mend the system they have forced upon us. I have not read Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech referred to by the correspondent, but I know him too well to believe that he could have said what is imputed to him. I

know that he does not desire their withdrawal from wanton delight and that he will be the first man to harbour as a bosom friend every Englishman who is a lover of India and who wishes to remain as her servant indeed. Nor even in an independent India, do we contemplate prohibition against the residence of Englishmen in our midst on terms settled by the future state of our hope.

Young India, 17-11-1921

193. TO CORRESPONDENTS

C. N. VENKATASHASTRI : For the reasons already given in these columns, your letter, I am sorry, cannot be published. I would, however, recommend a reperusal of my article on Hinduism[1], and you will find more points of contact than of differences between us. You have scratched the surface, I have gone to the root. Our efforts have therefore yielded necessarily different results.

A. H. JAYASINHANI : 1. As a non-co-operator, I neither own nor disown George as my king. I have dissociated myself from the system administered under the King's name. I keep myself free to give my allegiance to him, if I can attain my full growth in his kingdom and can secure full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs.

2. As non-co-operators we *must* work in the jails for we do not non-co-operate with jails as such. We submit to the courts' discipline when we are dragged to the courts. Civil disobedience by its very nature requires us to yield complete obedience to jail regulations, for as civil resisters we *invite* imprisonment and therefore are bound to suffer the rigours of its discipline. But we can civilly resist such regulations as are not only irksome or hard to bear but are humiliating or specially designed to degrade non-co-operators. Our self-respect demands willing obedience to jail discipline. The same self-respect may require resistance to misbehaviour euphemistically called discipline. For instance we would refuse to draw lines with our noses whether within or without jails.

Young India, 17-11-1921

[1] *Vide* "Hinduism", 6-10-1921.

194. *CIVIL* v. *CRIMINAL*

When a man wilfully breaks his own laws, the disobedience becomes criminal. For he commits the breach not against himself but against someone else, and not only escapes punishment for the breach for there is none provided against himself by the maker of laws, but he avoids also the inconvenience caused by their observance. What is true of the individual is true of the corporation. At the present moment one observes this criminal breach by the Government of its own laws throughout India. Sections of the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code are being freely abused. And because non-co-operators refrain from questioning orders issued by officials, bare-faced illegalities are being committed by them with impunity. We have seen this in Bulandshahr, in Chittagong, all over Sind, and nowhere so systematically and so deliberately as in the Madras Presidency. Mr. Yakub Hassan has pointed out with great justification that his arrest and conviction are contrary to the spirit of the Viceregal pledge. Indeed it is against not only the spirit of Lord Reading's pledge but it is against the letter even of his predecessor's *communique* in which it was declared in solemn tones that so long as non-co-operation remained non-violent there would be no repression. No one dare accuse Mr. Yakub Hassan of having incited to violence in his Tanjore address before an audience of picked representatives. Nor was any violence done in the Tanjore district as a result of his speech. The Magistrate in the case of Mr. Iyer of the *Deshabhaktan* actually admitted that there was not a trace of violence in the writing that was impeached and that it actually contained exhortations to non-violence. Mr. Ramaswami Iyenger, leading pleader of Coimbatore, has been arrested for a spirited letter to *The Hindu* though there was no violence in it. And so have Dr. Varadarajulu and Mr. Gopalkrishnayya been arrested for their speeches and writings, although it is known that they not only do not incite to violence but that theirs is actually a restraining influence in the face of provocation. Is it any wonder if one infers from this campaign of repression an intention on the part of the Government to invite violence? In not one of these cases I have mentioned has there been any outbreak of violence as a result of the speeches and writings concerned. And so we see that the Government is guilty of criminal breach of its own laws. And what legal remedy has the afflicted individual against the Government? There is

certainly no sanction provided against the Government in law when it prostitutes the law itself to its own base ends. When therefore a Government thus becomes lawless in an organized manner, civil disobedience becomes a sacred duty and is the only remedy open specially to those who had no hand in the making of the Government or its laws. Another remedy there certainly is, and that is armed revolt. Civil disobedience is a complete, effective and bloodless substitute. And it is as well that by exemplary restraint and discipline in the way of submission to unjust and even illegal orders we have created the necessary atmosphere for civil disobedience. For thereby on the one hand the tyrannical nature of the Government has been made more manifest, and on the other by willing obedience we have fitted ourselves for civil disobedience.

It is equally as well that civil disobedience is being confined even now to the smallest area possible. It must be admitted that it is an abnormal state, even as a corrupt and unpopular Government should be in civilized society like disease an abnormal state. Therefore, only when a citizen has disciplined himself in the art of voluntary obedience to the state laws is he justified on rare occasions deliberately but non-violently to disobey them, and expose himself to the penalty of the breach. If then we are to achieve the maximum result in the minimum of time, whilst fiercest disobedience is going on in a limited area, perfect submission to the laws must be yielded in all the other parts so as to test the nation's capacity for voluntary obedience and for understanding the virtue of civil disobedience. Any unauthorized outbreak of disobedience, therefore, in any part of India will most certainly damage the cause and will betray an unpardonable ignorance of the principles of civil disobedience.

We must expect the Government to take the strictest measures to suppress this impending defiance of authority, for on it depends its very existence. Its instinct of self-preservation alone will actuate measures of repression adequate for suppression. And if it fails, the Government of necessity disappears. That is, it either bends to the national will or it is dissolved. The greatest danger lies in violence breaking out anywhere by reason of provocation. But it would be wrong and unmanly to invite the sternest measures and then to be incensed against them, apart from the fact that it will be a breach of our solemn pledge of non-violence. I may be arrested, thousands who take part in the peaceful revolt may also be arrested, imprisoned, even tortured. The rest of India must not lose its head. When the proper time comes, the rest of India may respond by undertaking civil disobedience and inviting arrests, imprisonments and tortures. It is the sacrifice of the innocent

we want to make. That alone will appear pleasing to God. And therefore, on the eve of the great battle the nation is embarking upon, my earnest exhortation to every non-co-operator is to fit himself for civil disobedience by fulfilling to the letter and in the spirit the conditions of civil disobedience laid down at Delhi,[1] and to ensure non-violence everywhere. Let us not be satisfied that we remain non-violent individually. We boast that non-co-operation has become universal in India. We boast that we have acquired sufficient influence even over the unruly masses to restrain them from violence. Let us prove true to our claim.

Young India, 17-11-1921

195. INTROSPECTION

Correspondents have written to me in pathetic language asking me not to commit suicide in January, should swaraj be not attained by then and should I find myself outside the prison walls. I find that language but inadequately expresses one's thought especially when the thought itself is confused or incomplete. My writing in the *Navajivan*[2] was, I fancied, clear enough. But I observe that its translation has been misunderstood by many. The original too has not escaped the tragedy that has overtaken the translation.

One great reason for the misunderstanding lies in my being considered almost a perfect man. Friends who know my partiality for the *Bhagavad Gita* have thrown relevant verses at me and shown how my threat to commit suicide contradicts the teachings which I am attempting to live. All these mentors of mine seem to forget that I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found the way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

If I was a perfect man, I own I should not feel the miseries of my neighbours as I do. As a perfect man I should take note of them, prescribe a remedy and compel adoption by the force of unchallengeable Truth in me. But as yet I only see as through a glass darkly and therefore have to carry conviction by slow and

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

[2] *Vide* "Optimism", 23-10-1921.

laborious processes, and then too not always with success. That being so, I would be less than human if with all my knowledge of avoidable misery pervading the land and of the sight of mere skeletons under the very shadow of the Lord of the Universe, I did not feel with and for all the suffering but dumb millions of India. The hope of a steady decline in that misery sustains me; but suppose that with all my sensitiveness to sufferings, to pleasure and pain, cold and heat and with all my endeavour to carry the healing message of the spinning-wheel to the heart, I have reached only the ear and never pierced the heart, suppose further that at the end of the year I find that the people are as sceptical as they are today about the present possibility of attainment of swaraj by means of the peaceful revolution of the wheel; suppose further, that I find that all the excitement during the past twelve months and more has been only an excitement and a stimulation but no settled belief in the programme, and lastly suppose that the message of peace has not penetrated the hearts of Englishmen, should I not doubt my *tapasya* and feel my unworthiness for leading the struggle? As a true man, what should I do? Should I not kneel down in all humility before my Maker and ask Him to take away this useless body and make me a fitter instrument of service?

Swaraj does consist in the change of government and its real control by the people, but that would be merely the form. The substance that I am hankering after is a definite acceptance of the means and therefore a real change of heart on the part of the people. I am certain that it does not require ages for Hindus to discard the error of untouchability, for Hindus and Mussulmans to shed enmity and accept heart-friendship as an eternal factor of national life, for all to adopt the charkha as the only universal means of attaining India's economic salvation and finally for all to believe that India's freedom lies only through non-violence and no other method. Definite, intelligent and free adoption by the nation of this programme I hold as the attainment of the substance. The symbol, the transfer of power, is sure to follow, even as the seed truly laid must develop into a tree.

The reader will thus perceive that what I accidentally stated to friends for the first time in Poona and then repeated to others was but a confession of my imperfections and an expression of my feeling of unworthiness for the great cause which for the time being I seem to be leading. I have enunciated no doctrine of despair. On the contrary I have felt never so sanguine as I do at the time of writing that we will gain the substance during this year. I have stated at the same time as a practical idealist, that I should

no more feel worthy to lead a cause which I might feel myself diffident of handling. The doctrine of labouring without attachment means as much a relentless pursuit of truth as a retracing after discovery of error and a renunciation of leadership without a pang after discovery of unworthiness. I have but shadowed forth my intense longing to lose myself in the Eternal and become merely a lump of clay in the Potter's divine hands so that my service may become more certain because uninterrupted by the baser self in me.

Young India, 17-11-1921

196. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOMBAY[1]

November 17, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of his speech said he had come to Bombay almost against his wish as he had got some urgent work in hand, which had been entrusted to him by the All-India Cogress Committee and he was unable to spare a single moment for any other purpose. But at the urgent request of Mr. H. S. Khatri and Mrs. S. G. Banker, who had sent him repeated telegrams, he had come down to Bombay to be present at the meeting. He congratulated the people on the perfect calm they had so far preserved in spite of the provocation which they had been offered by arresting some of their volunteers and their captain for sticking posters on the walls asking the people to boycott the festivities in connection with the Prince's visit. He did not see anything objectionable in these posters; on the other hand, they were doing honour to the Prince, because they were telling him the truth. There could be no offence at all in telling the Prince the truth. In fact it was their duty to tell him the truth that the welcome which was being extended to him was given by the officials and that the people—the large majority of people—had no share in it. The Mahatma advised the people to keep the peace and be non-violent even if all the posters were taken away from them, for Indians had to get redress for their Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Non-violence was their creed and they had to keep to that principle whatever it might cost them. Therefore, he congratulated the people of Bombay on their non-violence. When civil disobedience was once begun either in Bardoli, Anand or Nadiad talukas he wanted the people of Bombay to keep perfectly quiet, whatever might happen there. Formerly people were afraid of going to jail, but now everyone was anxious to get into it; men and even women had come to him and asked him anxiously whether they could not go to jail. To soldiers it was the same whether they

[1] At 10.30 a.m., behind Elphinstone Mills

died in their duty, whether they went to jail, or whether they remained quiet doing their duty. In every case they had to obey the orders which were given them. They were the army of swaraj and every one of them had to obey the orders given to him. In Bardoli when civil disobedience was begun there might be firing but every one of them in Bombay should sit quiet—there should be no hartal, or trouble of any kind. Then only could they have swaraj. He felt sure that without the necessary sacrifices on their part they would never get swaraj. He also felt that without complete Hindu-Muslim unity there could be no swaraj. He felt that there was no complete unity between the two communities now. The Hindus were afraid of the Muslims and the Muslims were afraid of the Hindus. All these feelings of doubt and suspicion should disappear for ever. Those suspicions of each other were there because we had become cowards and had given up our religion. Those who were ready to die in the name of their religion were real patriots and religious men. Therefore, he was telling his Hindu brothers that so long as they were true Hindus there was nothing to fear from any other religion, even if a six-foot Pathan came to them brandishing a knife they had nothing to fear. The same advice he had also given to his Muslim friends. Even now there were lurking in the minds of each community some doubts about the other. The next thing was swadeshi. Some of the women and men who had come to the meeting had still some foreign clothes on their bodies. In this instance, he said, Maulana Azad Sobhani had made it a business of his to beg for any foreign clothing which he might see his friends wearing and then destroy it. People should not mind wearing even thick khaddar. Mrs. Naidu had complained to him that it was a difficult thing to wear thick khaddar. But since she was the first or the second person to sign the satyagraha vow she was bound to wear thick khaddar. If they were unable to wear thick khaddar it was because they had grown weak and were not strong enough to do so. In the Punjab a sister had asked him what she should do about her clothes and his advice to her was that she should content hereself with a petticoat and a skirt. They should have as little clothing as possible.

The people were in duty bound to do their work in a non-violent manner; so long as they believed in non-violence, swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. They had no business to resort to violence. Then they would not have any occasion to die. There was not much difference between life and death; in fact, they were one and the same. Until they were ready to die they would not get swaraj and redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs. Then only would they be able to set at liberty the Ali Brothers and Gangadharrao Deshpande. He had written[1] to Gangadharrao Deshpande—he did not know what impelled him to do so—that he should take as much rest as he could before the 31st December, for after that he would come out of the jail and would have to

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Gangadharrao Deshpande", Before 8-10-1921.

work for the country. For setting their friends free Indians must either have swaraj, or they must go to jail, or die in the service of their country. He had come to the meeting to tell them of this. The people of Bombay were fond of fine clothes and luxuries, but as soon as they were ready to work and die for swaraj, swaraj was theirs. He had still great hopes in the people of Bombay. The time was short and they must be up and doing their duty. He was not sure what would happen before the 31st of December. He constantly prayed to God that either he should be put into jail, or shot dead, or that India be made free. His idea of swaraj in this country was not anarchy. He wanted the people to become godfearing and virtuous, truthful and religious and brave men. He did not know what would happen to him and possibly these might be his last words. Therefore, he would appeal to them to do their duty by their country fearlessly. They were not ready to kill, but they were ready to die. They must convince the Government by their attitude that to kill them or repress them was a sin and a thing which could not be done. Unless they trusted others they would not be trusted by others. He asked them to trust other men, and by so doing they would become friends with their rulers. But whether they were friends or not, Indians should not harbour in their hearts any feelings of hatred for their rulers. They should fight for swaraj without any hatred towards the other party. If he could make Indians understand this then swaraj would be theirs. He wanted them to be convinced that to die was a greater and braver thing than to kill. He also asked them that as long as the Prince was amongst them they should not harm even a hair of his head, and they should not harm the Government officers. If Government wanted to kill them, then let them kill Indians, for they were ready to die. He thanked God that he had given him an opportunity of speaking to them that morning.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-11-1921

197. *LETTER TO DAYALJI AND KALYANJI*

Thursday [November 17, 1921]

BHAISHRI DAYALJI AND KALYANJI,

It grieves me to tell you that a violent riot has broken out in Bombay. Wine shops have been burnt down. One of them is still burning as I write this. Innocent people have been harassed and their clothes forcibly removed. A tram has been smashed and lamps have been broken. Personally, I feel that the people have crossed all bounds. Six policemen have lost their lives. A few of our people have also died. We have had a foretaste of swaraj. I have been put to shame. It is difficult to say what will happen tonight. In this condition, how can I go there? I am, there-

fore, sending someone else, who will tell you everything and explain the position. It is now likely that there will be some change in our programme too. If the riot turns more violent, our plans will remain plans and events will wait on God's will. On your side, I take it, there is complete peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2669

198. A DEEP STAIN

[November 18, 1921][1]

Under the above heading Mr. Gandhi published the following note after having witnessed the unfortunate disturbances in Bombay:

The reputation of Bombay, the hope of my dreams, was being stained yesterday[2] even whilst in my simplicity I was congratulating the citizens[3] upon their non-violence in the face of grave provocation. For the volunteers with their captain were arrested during the previous night for pasting posters under authority on private property. The posters advised the people to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They were destroyed. The Swaraj Sabha's office was mysteriously entered and the unused posters, so far as I am aware not declared unlawful, were also removed. The Prince's visit itself and the circumstances attending the ceremonials arranged and public money wasted for the manufacture of a welcome to His Royal Highness constituted an unbearable provocation. And yet Bombay had remained self-restrained. This, I thought, was a matter for congratulation. The burning of the pile of foreign cloth was an eloquent counter-demonstration to the interested official demonstration.

Little did I know that at the very time that the Prince was passing through the decorated route and the pile of foreign cloth was burning, in another part of the city the mill-hands were in criminal disobedience of the wishes of their masters emptying them, first one and then the others, by force, that a swelling mob was

[1] Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

[2] November 17, when the Prince of Wales arrived in Bombay and demonstrations against his visit including bonfires of foreign cloth resulted in riots on a large scale

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

molesting peaceful passengers in the tram-cars and holding up the tram traffic, that it was forcibly depriving those that were wearing foreign caps of their head-dresses and pelting inoffensive Europeans. As the day went up, the fury of the mob now intoxicated with its initial success rose also. They burnt tram-cars and a motor, smashed liquor shops and burnt two.

I heard of the outbreak at about 1 o'clock. I motored with some friends to the area of disturbance and heard the most painful and the most humiliating story of molestation of Parsi sisters. Some few were assaulted, and even had their saris torn from them. No one from among a crowd of over fifteen hundred who had surrounded my car denied the charge as a Parsi with hot rage and quivering lips was with the greatest deliberation relating the story. An elderly Parsi gentleman said, "Please save us from this mob rule." This news of the rough handling of Parsi sisters pierced me like a dart. I felt that my sisters or daughters had been hurt by a violent mob! Yes, some Parsis had joined the welcome. They had a right to hold their own view free of molestation. There can be no coercion in swaraj. The Moplah fanatic who forcibly converts a Hindu believes that he is acquiring religious merit. A non-co-operator or his associate who uses coercion has no apology whatsoever for his criminality.

As I reached the Two Tanks I found a liquor shop smashed, two policemen badly wounded and lying unconscious on cots without anybody caring for them. I alighted. Immediately the crowd surrounded me and yelled *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai.* That sound usually grates on my ears, but it has grated never so much as it did yesterday when the crowd unmindful of the two sick brethren choked me with the shout at the top of their voices. I rebuked them and they were silent. Water was brought for the two wounded men. I requested two of my companions and some from the crowd to take the dying policemen to the hospital. I proceeded then to the scene a little further up where I saw a fire rising. They were two tram-cars which were burnt by the crowd. On returning I witnessed a burning motor car. I appealed to the crowd to disperse, told them that they had damaged the cause of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. I returned sick at heart and in a chastened mood.

At about five a few brave Sindhi young men came to report that in Bhindi Bazar the crowd was molesting every passer-by who had a foreign cap on and even serioulsy beating him, if he refused to give up his cap. A brave old Parsi who defied the crowd and would not give up his *puggree* was badly handled.

Maulana Azad Sobhani and I went to Bhindi Bazar and reasoned with the crowd, told them that they were denying their religion by hurting innocent men. The crowd made a show of dispersing. The police were there but they were exceedingly restrained. We went further and on retracing our steps found to our horror a liquor shop on fire. Even the fire brigade was obstructed in its work. Thanks to the efforts of Pandit Nekiram Sharma and others, the inmates of the shop were able to come out.

The crowd did not consist of hooligans only or boys. It was not an unintelligent crowd. They were not all mill-hands. It was essentially a mixed unprepared crowd and unwilling to listen to anybody. For the moment it had lost its head. And it was not a crowd but several crowds numbering in all not less than twenty thousand. It was bent upon mischief and destruction.

I heard that there was firing resulting in deaths and that in the Anglo-Indian quarters everyone who passed with khadi on came in for hard beating, if he did not put off his khadi cap or shirt. I heard that many were seriously injured. I am writing this in the midst of six Hindu and Mussulman workers who have just come in with broken heads and bleeding and one with a broken nasal bone and other lacerated wounds and in danger of losing his life. They went to Parel led by Maulanas Azad Sobhani and Mouzam Ali to pacify the mill-hands who, it was reported, were holding up tram-cars there. The workers, however, were unable to proceed to their destination. They returned with their bleeding wounds to speak for themselves.

Thus the hope of reviving mass civil disobedience has once more in my opinion been dashed to pieces. The atmosphere for mass civil disobedience is absent. It is not enough to say that such an atmosphere is to be found in Bardoli, and, therefore, it may go on side by side with the violence in Bombay. This is impossible. Neither Bardoli nor Bombay can be treated as separate, unconnected units. They are parts of one great indivisible whole. It was possible to isolate Malabar. It was also possible to disregard Malegaon. But it is not possible to ignore Bombay.

Non-co-operators cannot escape liability. It is true that non-co-operators were ceaselessly remonstrating everywhere with the people at considerable risk to themselves, to arrest or stop the mischief and that they are responsible for saving many precious lives. But that is not enough for launching out on civil disobedience or to discharge us from liability for the violence that has taken place. We claim to have established a peaceful atmo-

sphere, i.e., to have attained by our non-violence sufficient control over the people to keep their violence under check. We have failed when we ought to have succeeded. For yesterday was a day of our trial. We were under our pledge bound to protect the person of the Prince from any harm or insult. And we broke that pledge inasmuch as any one of us insulted or injured a single European or any other who took part in the welcome to the Prince. They were as much entitled to take part in the welcome as we were to refrain. Nor can I shirk my own personal responsibility. I am more instrumental than any other in bringing into being the spirit of revolt. I find myself not fully capable of controlling and disciplining that spirit. I must do penance for it. For me the struggle is essentially religious. I believe in fasting and prayer, and I propose henceforth to observe every Monday a twenty-four hour's fast till swaraj is a[ttained] . . .[1]

The Working Committee will have to devote its attention to the situation and consider in the light thereof whether mass civil disobedience can be at all encouraged until we have obtained complete control over the masses. I have personally come deliberately to the conclusion that mass civil disobedience cannot be started for the present. I confess my inability to conduct a campaign of civil disobedience to a successful issue unless a completely non-violent spirit is generated among the people. I am sorry for the conclusion. It is a humiliating confession of my incapacity, but I know that I shall appear more pleasing to my Maker by being what I am instead of appearing to be what I am not. If I can have nothing to do with the organized violence of the Government, I can have less to do with the unorganized violence of the people. I would prefer to be crushed between the two.

Young India, 24-11-1921

[1] The source is blank here.

199. *APPEAL TO BOMBAY CITIZENS*

November 19, 1921[1]

MEN AND WOMEN OF BOMBAY,

It is not possible to describe to you the agony I have suffered during the past two days. I am writing this now at 3.30 a.m. in perfect peace. After two hours' prayer and meditation I have found it.

I must refuse to eat or drink anything but water till the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bombay have made peace with the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, and till the non-co-operators have made peace with the co-operators.

The swaraj that I have witnessed during the last two days has stunk in my nostrils. Hindu-Muslim unity has been a menace to the handful of Parsis, Christians and Jews. The non-violence of the non-co-operators has been worse than the violence of co-operators. For with non-violence on our lips we have terrorized those who have differed from us and in so doing we have denied our God. There is only one God for us all, whether we find him through the Koran, the Bible, the Zend-Avesta, the Talmud or the *Gita*. And He is God of Truth and Love. I have no interest in living save for proving this faith in me. I cannot hate an Englishman or anyone else. I have spoken and written much against his institutions, especially the one he has set up in India. I shall continue to do so if I live. But you must not mistake my condemnation of the system for that of the man. My religion requires me to love him as I love myself. I would deny God if I did not attempt to prove it at this critical moment.

And the Parsis? I have meant every word I have said about them. Hindus and Mussulmans will be unworthy of freedom if they do not defend them and their honour with their lives. They have only recently proved their liberality and friendship. The Mussulmans are especially beholden to them, for the Parsis have, compared to their numbers, given more than they themselves to the Khilafat funds. Unless Hindus and Mussulmans have expressed full and free repentance, I cannot face again the appealing eyes of Parsi men and women that I saw on the 17th instant as I

[1] This was issued as a leaflet under the caption "Mr. Gandhi's Appeal to Bombay Citizens"; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

passed through them. Nor can I face Andrews when he returns from East Africa if we have done no reparation to the Indian Christians whom we are bound to protect as our own brothers and sisters. We may not think of what they or the Parsis in self-defence or by way of reprisals have done to some of us.

You can see quite clearly that I must do the utmost reparation to this handful of men and women who have been the victims of forces that have come into being largely through my instrumentality. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to do likewise. But I do not want anyone to fast. Fasting is only good when it comes in answer to prayer and as a felt yearning of the soul. I invite every Hindu and Mussulman to retire to his home, ask God for forgiveness and to befriend the injured communities from the bottom of his heart.

I invite my fellow-workers not to waste a single word of sympathy for me. I need or deserve none. But I invite them to make ceaseless effort to regain control over the turbulent elements. This is a terribly true struggle. There is no room for sham or humbug in it. Before we can make any further progress with our struggle we must cleanse our hearts.

One special word to my Mussulman brothers. I have approached the Khilafat as a sacred cause. I have striven for Hindu-Muslim unity because India cannot live free without it and because we would both deny God if we considered one another as natural enemies. I have thrown myself into the arms of the Ali Brothers because I believe them to be true and godfearing men. The Mussulmans have to my knowledge played the leading part during the two days of carnage. It has deeply hurt me. I ask every Mussulman worker to rise to his full height, to realize his duty to his faith and see that the carnage stops.

May God bless everyone of us with wisdom and courage to do the right at any cost.

I am,
Your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

200. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL DAYAL

SABARMATI,
Kartak Vad 4 [*November 19, 1921*][1]

SHA. GIRDHARILAL,

Received your letter. I am sorry that your brother-in-law has been injured. What other remedy than patience can I offer?

MOHANDAS GANDHI

SHA. GIRDHARILAL DAYAL
2ND FLOOR
THAKKAR KANJI KESHAVJINO MALO
SATRISHI GALI
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 7680

201. AN APPEAL TO THE MAVALIS

[*November 20, 1921*][2]

TO THE MAVALIS OF BOMBAY,

The most terrible mistake I have made is, that I thought non-co-operators had acquired influence over you and that you had understood the relative value, the political wisdom of non-violence though not the moral necessity of it. I had thought that you had sufficiently understood the interests of your country not to meddle with the movement to its detriment and that therefore you would have wisdom enough not to give way to your worst passions. But it cuts me to the quick to find that you have used the mass awakening for your own lust for plunder, rapine and even indulging in your worst animal appetite. Whether you call yourself a Hindu, Mussulman, Parsi, Christian or Jew, you have certainly failed to consider even your own religious interests. Some of my friends would, I know, accuse me of ignorance of human nature. If I believed the charge, I would plead guilty and retire from human assemblies and return only after acquiring

[1] Bears the Dead Letter Office postmark of December 10, 1921. *Kartak Vad* 4 was 19-11-1921.

[2] Issued as a leaflet on this date; *vide Navajivan*, 24-11-1921.

knowledge of human nature. But I know that I had no difficulty in controlling even the Indian Mavalis in South Africa. I was able because I had succeeded in approaching them through co-workers where I had no personal contact with them. In your case I see now that we have failed to reach you. I do not believe you to be incapable of responding to the noble call of religion and country.

See what you have done! The Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have violated the sanctity of Parsi temples, and they have exposed their own to similar risk from the wrath of Parsi Mavalis. Because some Parsis have chosen to partake in the welcome to the Prince, the Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have roughly handled every Parsi they have met. The result has been, that the Parsi Mavalis have now turned their attention to Hindus and Mussulmans. Certainly the Parsi Mavalis are less to blame. Hindu and Mussulman Mavalis have rudely, roughly and insolently removed the foreign cloth worn by some Parsis and Christians, forgetting that not all Hindus and all Mussulmans, nor by any means even a majority of them, have religiously discarded the use of foreign cloth. The Parsi and the Christian Mavalis are therefore interfering with the Hindu and Mussulman wearers of khadi. Thus we are all moving in a vicious circle and the country suffers.

I write this not to blame but to warn you and to confess that we have grievously neglected you. I am doing the penance in one way. The other workers are doing it in another way. Messrs Azad Sobhani, Jayakar[1], Jamnadas Mehta, Sathe, Mozam Ali and many others have been risking their lives in bringing under control this unfortunate ebullition. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu has fearlessly gone in your midst to reason with you and appeal to you. Our work in your midst has only just begun. Will you not give us a chance by stopping the mad process of retaliation? The Hindus and the Mussulmans should be ashamed to take reprisals against the Parsis or the Christians. The latter must know it to be suicidal to battle against Hindu and Mussulman ferocity by brute strength. The result is they must seek the assistance of an alien Government, i.e., sell their freedom. Surely the best course for them is to realize their nationality and believe that the reasoning Hindus and Mussulmans must and will protect the interests of minorities before their own. Any way the problem before Bombay is to ensure the absolute protection of the minorities and the acquisition of control over the rowdy element. And I shall trust that you, the Mavalis

[1] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and Liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India, 1937

of Bombay, will now restrain your hand and give a chance to the workers who are desirous of serving you. May God help you.

I am,
Your friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 24-11-1921

202. EATING STEEL PELLETS

To take the lead in starting civil disobedience is a more difficult task for Gujarat than eating steel pellets. Even if, however, one single taluka passes the test, then I have no doubt that swaraj will be in our hands in no time. Such success will mean that an army of satyagrahis has been organized in that taluka. I have already stated that everyone is eligible for enlistment in this army, men and women, the young and the old, the cripple and the disabled, the weak and the strong, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, *Dheds* and *Bhangis*. Even a child of the stamp of Prahlad is welcome, if there is any such coming forward. Parents, too, can send their children to enlist themselves. Notwithstanding that the army will be such a mixed crew, it can give a better account of itself than the opponent's army. How can this army, besides, require any expense? The only qualification needed for a soldier of this army is fearlessness. He ought to have the strength to lay down his life and that means he ought to have faith in God.

The other qualifications which I have asked for[1] are not needed at all times. They are essential only under the present circumstances.

But though this appears easy on paper, the task will be difficult in practice so long as it is not properly understood. The taluka which offers to start civil disobedience must have undergone a complete change. The soldiers in its army will not be wasting a moment in idleness. When, therefore, the fight actually begins, every satyagrahi man and every woman will either be offering civil disobedience for courting imprisonment or will be spinning or weaving, carding or ginning cotton. No one, without exception, can sit idle even for a moment, whether he be rich or poor. Among the soldiers of an army, no distinction of rich and poor can be

[1] *Vide* "Test", 13-11-1921.

made. When King George V was a naval cadet, like any other member of the crew he slept on the floor and ate hard bran bread and stewed tea or coffee without milk. And that is as it should be.

The taluka, therefore, which has organized itself or is organizing for civil disobedience should prepare a separate register for every village in its area and fill in the following details:

1. Name of the village
2. Distance from the head-quarters
3. Total population—giving separately the numbers of adult men and women, of boys and girls under 16, of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, *Dheds* and *Bhangis*
4. The number of spinning-wheels
5. The number of hand-looms
6. The number of hand-carding tools
7. Stock of cotton
8. Whether it has a school and, if it has, the number of pupils attending it
9. Number of policemen
10. Other marks of British authority
11. Number of persons ready for imprisonment
12. Number of liquor shops
13. Number of persons, if any, who favour co-operation with Government.

If we have organized ourselves into an army, there must be a representative leader and a people's *panch* in every village. There should be batches of 20 persons each, one of whom should be the leader. There should be further batches of 20 such leaders each with one of the 20 appointed as leader. As far as possible, the batches should not be formed on the basis of Hindus and Muslims or distinctions of any other kind. The best way is for neighbours to form a batch. Where public opinion has been educated, this task should present no difficulty at all. Such organization is in truth an indication of public opinion having been educated.

If every village has good workers, this work can be easily completed in two days. Our villages do not have a large population and the work can be practically finished in one meeting held in the morning. I shall expect full information on all these details in the taluka to which I may be invited to go.

Why do I name this small task as "eating steel pellets"? Because we have lost the fighter's spirit and forsaken service of others. We have become oblivious of loyalty to community or creed or kinship. It is not for ourselves that we shall be laying down our lives; we shall be doing so for the people. Before, however, we do that,

the people should be awakened or we should die in the attempt to rouse them.

The fact is that we have either actually forgotten the habits of industry or, in the work in which we spend our time, we take no account of people's happiness or welfare. We are so short-sighted as never to look beyond the interests of our family. All our religions, however, teach us that the individual must be ready to die for the family, the family for the village, the village for the taluka, the taluka for the district, the district for the province, the province for Bharatvarsha and, finally, the latter for the world. This is the ideal of patriotism for which I live; and death in the attempt to demonstrate it will be as dear to me as life itself. To live without this ideal is as good as death to me. If there is any real happiness in this transient world, it lies in suffering at the suffering of others, in dying while protecting others. He who lives in this way ever lives in bliss. It is no difficult task to do all this. All that is necessary is change of heart and some thinking. This need not take a long time, for sacrificing the body for the sake of one's neighbour comes spontaneous to the *atman*.

If the taluka which comes forward has realized this truth, what seems to be as hard as eating steel pellets will look as easy as eating gram specially boiled soft for an old man like me.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-11-1921

203. WHAT IS TRUTH?

There is a story in the gospel, in which a judge inquired, "What is truth?", but got no answer. The holy books of Hindus tell of Harishchandra who sacrificed his all at the altar of Truth and let himself, his wife, and his son be sold to a *Chandala*. (What, by the way, must be the position about untouchability in those early days?) Imam Hassan and Hussein lost their lives for the sake of truth.

The fact remains, however, that the question posed by that judge has not been answered. Harishchandra renounced his all for the sake of the truth as he knew it and so won immortal fame. Imam Hussein gave up his dear life for truth as he understood it. But Harishchandra's truth and Imam Hussein's truth may or may not be our truth.

Beyond these limited truths, however, there is one absolute Truth which is total and all-embracing. But it is indescribable, be-

cause it is God. Or say, rather, God is Truth. All else is unreal and false. Other things, therefore, can be true only in a relative sense.

He, therefore, who understands truth, follows nothing but truth in thought, speech and action, comes to know God and gains the seer's vision of the past, the present and the future. He attains *moksha* though still encased in the physical frame.

If we get one single person, before the 31st of December, who would practise truth to such perfection, swaraj should be ours this very day.

Some of us are no more than *satya-agrahis*, those, in other words, who aspire to follow truth scrupulously, but they hardly succeed in doing so even in the limited sphere of speech. We thus see that observance of the vow of truth is no easy matter.

A friend remarked: "You have taken the vow of truth; and yet you misread the telegram from Mr. Das[1] so as to interpret it in your favour and announced Bengal's contribution to be 25 lakhs instead of what it was, 15 lakhs. Were you not, in this case, guilty of a subtle form of untruth?" I did not deliberately interpret the telegram in my favour. I am not in the habit of reading meanings which suit me. But I was certainly hasty in interpreting the telegram. It was received late at night after 12. I state this fact not by way of extenuation but to show that truth must shine as brightly as ever even when one has mounted the gallows. He who yearns to follow the truth at all times and under all conditions must not be guilty of such haste. One who always follows truth is never guilty of untruth in word or deed even unknowingly. In fact such a person becomes incapable of acting in this manner. According to this definition, I certainly lapsed from truth.

My only consolation is that I never claim anything beyond a sincere endeavour to keep the vow of truth. It never happens that I tell a lie deliberately. I do not remember having deliberately told a lie any time in my life, except on one occasion when I cheated my revered father. It has become part of my nature to speak the truth and act in accordance with truth. But it is impossible for me to claim that truth, which I perceive but dimly, has become part of my life. I am not beyond indulgence in unconscious exaggeration or self-praise or taking interest in describing my achievements. There is a shade of untruth in all these and they will not stand the test of truth. A life wholly filled with the spirit of truth should be clear and pure as crystal. Untruth cannot survive even for a moment in the presence of such a person. No one

[1] C. R. Das

can deceive a man who always follows truth, for it ought to be impossible that untruth will not be exposed in his presence. The most difficult vow to keep is the vow of truth. Out of lakhs who may strive to follow truth, only a rare person will succeed completely in the course of his present life.

When somebody utters a lie before me, I get more angry with myself than with him because I then realize that untruth still exists somewhere deep in me.

The word *satya* comes from *sat*, which means "to be", "to exist". Only God is ever the same through all time. A thousand times honour to him who has succeeded, through love and devotion for this *satya*, in opening out his heart permanently to its presence. I have been but striving to serve that truth. I have, I believe, the courage to jump from the top of the Himalayas for its sake. At the same time, I know that I am still very far from that truth. As I advance towards it, I perceive my weakness ever more clearly and the knowledge makes me humble. It is possible to be puffed up with pride so long as one does not know one's own insignificance. But once a man sees it, his pride melts away. Mine melted away long ago. I can very well understand why Tulsidas called himself a villain. This path is for the brave alone; the timid had better not tread it. He who strives for all the twenty-four hours of the day ever meditating on truth, whether eating, drinking, sitting, sleeping, spinning or easing himself, doing anything whatever, will certainly have his whole being filled with truth. And when the sun of truth blazes in all its glory in a person's heart, he will not remain hidden. He will not, then, need to use speech and to explain. Or, rather, every word uttered by him will be charged with such power, such life, that it will produce an immediate effect on the people. I do not have this truth in me. But, as I happen to be treading this path, I am in the unhappy condition of the castor-oil plant which, as they say, is king on a tree-less heath.

Truth cannot exist without love. Truth includes non-violence, *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and other rules. It is only for convenience that the five *yamas* have been mentioned separately. The man who commits violence after knowing truth falls from truth. That a man who has known truth can be lecherous is as inconceivable as that darkness may exist despite the sun shining. If, we have, before 31st of December, even one person who will follow truth to this perfect degree, swaraj is a certainty, for everyone will have to obey his word as law. The sun's light does not need to be pointed out. Truth shines with its own light and is its own proof. In these evil times, it is difficult to follow truth

in such perfection but I know it is not impossible. If a large number from among us strive to follow it even in some measure, we can win swaraj. We can also win it if a few of us pursue it with utmost consciousness. Only, we must be sincere. It will not do merely to make a show of following truth. It does not matter if we follow truth only to the extent of one anna in a rupee, but it must be truth and not something else. The little measure of it which we follow must not, in any circumstances, be mixed with deliberate falsehood. It is my earnest desire that, in this holy *yajna*, all of us will learn to follow truth as a matter of principle.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-11-1921

204. NOTE TO REV. J. KELLOCK[1]

Silence Day, November 21, 1921

I thank the English friends for going.[2] I do not rise because rising is a strain. I am anxious for us all to be friends although we may differ as poles asunder.

From a photostat C.W. 4502

205. STATEMENT BEFORE BREAKING FAST

[November 21, 1921]

Mr. Gandhi broke his fast in the midst of a gathering of co-operators, non-co-operators, Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians and Parsis. There were speeches of goodwill by a representative of each community. The members of the Working Committee were also present. Mr. Gandhi made a statement in Gujarati before breaking his fast. The following is its translation:

FRIENDS,

It delights my heart to see Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians met together in this little assembly. I hope that our frugal fruit-repast of this morning will be a sign of our permanent friendship. Though a born optimist, I am not in the habit of building castles in the air. This meeting therefore cannot deceive

1 Professor, Wilson College, Bombay
2 To disturbed areas as members of an inter-communal team to restore confidence and peace

me. We shall be able to realize the hope of permanent friendship between all communities, only if we who have assembled together will incessantly strive to build it up. I am breaking my fast upon the strength of your assurances.[1] I have not been unmindful of the affection with which innumerable friends have surrounded me during these four days. I shall ever remain grateful to them. Being drawn by them I am plunging into this stormy ocean out of the haven of peace in which I have been during these few days. I assure you that in spite of the tales of misery that have been poured into my ears, I have enjoyed peace because of a hungry stomach. I know that I cannot enjoy it after breaking the fast. I am too human not to be touched by the sorrows of others, and when I find no remedy for alleviating them, my human nature so agitates me that I pine to embrace death like a long-lost dear friend. Therefore I warn all the friends here that if real peace is not established in Bombay and if disturbances break out again and if as a result they find me driven to a still severer ordeal, they must not be surprised or troubled. If they have any doubt about peace having been established, if each community has still bitterness of feeling and suspicion and if we are all not prepared to forget and forgive past wrongs, I would much rather that they did not press me to break the fast. Such a restraint I would regard as a test of true friendship.

I venture to saddle special responsibility upon Hindus and Mussulmans. The majority of them are non-co-operators. Non-violence is the creed they have accepted for the time being. They have the strength of numbers. They can stand in spite of the opposition of the smaller communities without Government aid. If therefore they will remain friendly and charitable towards the smaller communities, all will be well. I will beseech the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews to bear in mind the new awakening in India. They will see many-coloured waters in the ocean of Hindu and Mussulman humanity. They will see dirty waters on the shore. I would ask them to bear with their Hindu or Mussulman neighbours who may misbehave with them and immediately report to the Hindu and Mussulman leaders through their own leaders with a view to getting justice. Indeed I am hoping that as a result of the unfortunate discord a *Mahajan* will come into being for the disposal of all inter-racial disputes.

The value of this assembly in my opinion consists in the fact that worshippers of the same one God we are enabled to partake

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

of this harmless repast together in spite of our differences of opinion. We have not assembled with the object today of reducing such differences, certainly not of surrendering a single principle we may hold dear, but we have met in order to demonstrate that we can remain true to our principles and yet also remain free from ill will towards one another.

May God bless our effort.

Young India, 24-11-1921

206. TO CO-WORKERS

November 22, 1921

COMRADES,

Past few days have been a fiery ordeal for us, and God is to be thanked that some of us have not been found wanting. The broken heads before me and the dead bodies of which I have heard on unimpeachable authority are sufficient evidence of the fact. Workers have lost their lives or limbs, or have suffered bruises in the act of preserving peace, of weaning mad countrymen from their wrath. These deaths and injuries show, that in spite of the error of many of our countrymen, some of us are prepared to die for the attainment of our goal. If all of us had imbibed the spirit of non-violence, or if some had and the others had remained passive, no blood need have been spilt. But it was not to be. Some must therefore voluntarily give their blood in order that a bloodless atmosphere may be created. So long as there are people weak enough to do violence, there will be others weak enough to seek the aid of those who have superior skill or means for doing it. And that is why the Parsis and the Christians sought and received the assistance of the Government such that the Government openly took sides, and armed and aided the latter in retaliatory madness, and criminally neglected to protect a single life among those, who though undoubtedly guilty in the first instance were the victims of the pardonable wrath of the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews. The Government has thus appeared in its nakedness as a party doing violence not merely to preserve peace but to sustain the aggressive violence of its injured supporters. Its police and military looked on with callous indifference whilst the Christians in their justifiable indignation deprived innocent men of their white caps and hammered those who would not surrender them, or whilst the Parsis assaulted or

shot, not in self-defence but because the victims happened to be Hindus or Mussulmans or non-co-operators. I can excuse the aggrieved Parsis and Christians, but can find no excuse for the criminal conduct of the police and the military in taking sides.

So the task before the workers is to take the blows from the Government and our erring countrymen. This is the only way open to us of sterilizing the forces of violence. The way to immediate swaraj lies through our gaining control over the forces of violence, and that not by greater violence but by moral influence. We must see as clearly as daylight that it is impossible for us to be trained and armed for violence effective enough for displacing the existing Government.

Some people imagine, that after all we could not have better advertised our indignation against the welcome to the Prince than by letting loose the mob frenzy on the fateful seventeenth. This reasoning betrays at once ignorance and weakness, ignorance of the fact that our goal was not injury to the welcome, and weakness because we still hanker after advertising our strength to others instead of being satisfied with the consciousness of its possession. I wish I could convince everyone, that we materially retarded our progress to our triple goal.

But all is not lost if the workers realize and act up to their responsibility. We must secure the full co-operation of the rowdies of Bombay. We must know the mill-hands. They must either work for the Government or for us, i.e., for violence or against it. There is no middle way. They must not interfere with us. They must either be amenable to our love or helplessly submit to the bayonet. They may not seek shelter under the banner of non-violence for the purpose of doing violence. And in order to carry our message to them, we must reach every mill-hand individually and let him understand and appreciate the struggle. Similarly we must reach the rowdy element, befriend them and help them to understand the religious character of the struggle. We must neither neglect them nor pander to them. We must become their servants.

The peace that we are aiming at is not a patched up peace. We must have fair guarantees of its continuance without the aid of the Government, sometimes even in spite of its activity to the contrary. There must be a heart union between Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews. The three latter communities may and will distrust the other two. The recent occurrences must strengthen that distrust. We must go out of our way to conquer their distrust. We must not molest them if they do not become full non-

co-operators or do not adopt swadeshi or the white khadi cap which has become its symbol. We must not be irritated against them even if they side with the Government on every occasion. We have to make them ours by right of loving service. This is the necessity of our situation. The alternative is a civil war. And a civil war, with a third power only too happy to consolidate itself by siding now with the one and then with the other, must be held an impossibility for the near future.

And what is true of the smaller communities is also true of the co-operators. We must not be impatient with or intolerant to them. We are bound to recognize their freedom to co-operate with the Government if we claim the freedom to non-co-operate. What would we have felt if we were in a minority and the co-operators being in a majority had used violence against us? Non-co-operation *cum* non-violence is the most expeditious method known to the world of winning over opponents. And our struggle consists in winning opponents including Englishmen over to our side. We can only do so by being free from ill will against the weakest or the strongest of them. And this we can only do by being prepared to die for the faith within us and not by killing those who do not see the truth we enunciate.

I am,
Your faithful comrade,
M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 24-11-1921

207. *NOTES*

O! for Shaukat Ali

During these days of great trial for me, I have felt the gravest need of Maulana Shaukat Ali by my side. I can wield no influence over the Mussulmans except through a Mussulman. There are many stalwart and good Mussulmans I know. But no Mussulman knows me through and through as Shaukat Ali does. Now I feel that I have to represent him and to speak to the Mussulmans things I used always to reserve for him. I observe that one of my appeals has already been misinterpreted. If Maulana Shaukat Ali was by me, I would not perhaps have needed to write the paragraph relating specially to Mussulmans. Probably if he was in Bombay on the 17th, the disturbance would not have occurred at all. Many things could have been prevented. Indeed on the 17th if

Mian Chhotani had been in Bombay, if Mr. Ahmed Haji Khatri had not been laid up in bed, things would have taken a different turn. But I do not wish to cry over spilt milk. I have introduced Maulana Shaukat Ali in the matter to tell my Mussulman friends that I shall shoulder the additional burden and that I expect them not to misunderstand me. I consider their interest a special trust which I shall not be consciously guilty of betraying. I expect too friends unhesitatingly to tell me wherein I err, and I assure them that I shall make the fullest confession if I am satisfied of my error. Only I warn them betimes, that as I do nothing hastily and without good grounds, they must not be surprised if I do not easily admit errors. That it is necessary for me to pen this paragraph shows that each has to write about or to the other with the greatest delicacy. It is a torturing performance like walking on thin ice. But we must take facts and things as they are and turn them to the best account.

GOOD AND BAD

The reader will appreciate the statement that during these four days I have been receiving accounts both good and bad. Non-co-operators injured! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Parsis! Parsis shooting them! Christians assaulting those wearing khadi caps or dress! Hindus and Mussulmans assaulting Christians! These bits of information are interspersed with the news that Parsis are saving Hindus and Mussulmans from the other Parsis, some Christians saving Hindus and Mussulmans, the latter sheltering both, non-co-operators at great peril to their lives seeking to bring about peace. It has never been my misfortune to be torn between two powerful and conflicting emotions. And then to guide friends in such a difficult situation, to send them to enter the jaws of Death and yet for me to avoid death! It is the fast that has been my outward staff and it is heart prayer that has been my inward strength. On the 17th I felt as if all my strength had vanished. Why was I unable permanently to influence the crowd? Where was the power of ahimsa in me? What was I to do? I could not, I would not, ask the aggrieved parties to seek Government aid. We had no panchayats to deal out justice. There was no one I could approach who could bring about peace. I could not and would not organize a trained physical force party. What relief could I give to the sufferers from mob violence? If I allowed myself to be torn to pieces by justly incensed Parsis or Christians, I would only give rise to greater bloodshed. Whilst as a soldier I must avoid no unavoidable risk, I must not recklessly

run the risk of being killed. Then what was I to do? At last came the fast to my rescue to soothe my soul. If I may not give myself to be killed through human agency, I must give myself to God to be taken away by refusing to eat till He heard my prayer. For me, a bankrupt, that was the only thing left. I could not draw upon the people from their innocence. They dishonoured the cheque I presented personally on the 17th.[1] I must now somehow or other recoup lost credit or die in the attempt. I must draw upon God for further credit to enable me to transact His business. I could only do so by humbling myself, crawling in the dust before Him, denying myself the food He has given. I must in a thousand ways show Him that I am in earnest, and if I am not found worthy to conduct His business, ask Him to recall me and refashion me according to my worth and His will. And so I have taken up the fast. The news of the hurt received by co-workers or the hurt received by the combatants no longer perturbs me. For me there is only my own non-violence as my help. If it does not answer, I must not worry. Thousands die in other parts of India and their deaths trouble me but do not worry me. Even so in this case if I could but do all I know, I need not *then* fret and fume. This fast then has been to me a penance, purification and reparation. It is also a warning to workers that they may not play with me in the movement. Only those who believe in non-violence need remain in the struggle. It could be conducted without difficulty and complications by a few staunch and true workers. It can only be harmed by insincere workers though many. Lastly it is a remedy for hastening peace. But the last is the derivative end. It comes as a result of penance, purification and reparation. It is the credit sent by God.

Workers Beware

I am receiving remonstrances against the fast. Some have taken up sympathetic fast. I assure all these that they are wrong. For me fast was a necessity. I was the guilty party, I was the bankrupt. The business of the others is to understand the situation, to rid themselves of violence if any, to spread non-violence among others and believe that the slightest violence must injure the cause. They must take up the charkha, they must promote not merely Hindu-Muslim unity but they must now promote unity among all communities. Hindu-Muslim unity is not worth a day's purchase if it does not prefer the interests of smaller communities to

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Bombay", 17-11-1921.

its own. Christians and Jews in India are not foreigners, nor are Parsis. We must go out of our way to be friendly to them and to serve and help them, above all to protect them from harm from ourselves. The workers must similarly make friends with co-operators. They must not speak ill of them whether they are English or Indian. We must believe in the truth of our cause and in our capacity for self-suffering. We have at any rate for the time being announced to the world in the name of God, that we do not propose to harm any Englishman no matter what he does to us. We shall be guilty before God and man if under the cover of our pledge we injure a single English or Indian co-operator.

The Meaning of Peace

Friends have misunderstood the meaning of the peace that I have referred to in my second appeal. The peace I want has to be made by non-co-operators. It does not mean surrender of principle or policy so as to find a common platform for work. That in my opinion is an impossible task, for the methods of the various groups are so radically different. When one party finds it for the good of the country to enter the councils and another to abstain, there is no meeting ground. But because we differ from one another, we need not behave indecently towards one another, nor need we break one another's heads. The creed of non-violence, while it persists, requires us not to retaliate. I am convinced, that if we can produce an atmosphere of toleration, we can extend our scope limitlessly. Today we are caged by our own doubts and suspicions. We are not sure that the thousands who flock to our meetings will observe non-violence. If we were not so popular, we should make much greater progress than we have made hitherto. And for this goodwill on our part towards our opponents is an absolute necessity. Let us not talk of the errors and omissions of the Government or its supporters. Let us dispassionately devote our energy, our speeches, writings and action to the working out of our own programme. Let us attain control over the rowdiest element, and we can establish swaraj immediately.

More about Medical Students

I am able this week to publish the correspondence referring to the Vizagapatam medical students. It is long but both interesting and instructive. It shows the mentality of the medical authorities and also of the Government. The final orders dismissing the students were passed under advice or with the cognizance of the Government of Madras. The reader will note that the dress regu-

lations were not strictly carried out at all and that after the caps were coloured black there was no excuse whatsoever for banning them. But the fact that the students had the audacity to wear khadi was enough to rouse the ire of the college authorities.[1] The reader will also note the humiliating character of the dress regulations. The tuft of hair or a bald head, a mark both of religion and respectability, must be hidden because it offended the Western taste of the Western professors. They could not enter the college with Indian shoes on. They must wear English shoes or remain barefoot. Thus the students are taught at an impressionable period of their lives to discard national dress. As a matter of fact Indian shoes for the Indian climate are infinitely superior to the English shoes as being airy and therefore more hygienic. The introduction of socks is inelegant and totally useless for the hot climate of India. Socks-wearers know the stench that their socks emit in this climate. But for our slavery, we would sweep away without a moment's thought all these injurious and unbecoming innovations.

Young India, 24-11-1921

208. THE MORAL ISSUE

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side. In Bombay the sympathizers of non-co-operation lost the moral balance. They were enraged against the Parsis and the Christians who took part in the welcome to the Prince and sought to "teach them a lesson". They invited reprisals and got them. It became after the 17th a game of seesaw in which no one really gained and everybody lost.

Swaraj does not lie that way. India does not want Bolshevism. The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to anyone who restores so-called order. Let us recognize the Indian psychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Mussulman of India is quite different from the average Mussulman of the other parts of the world. His Indian associations have made him more docile than his co-religionists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for any length of time. The Hindu is proverbially, almost contemptibly mild. The Parsi

1 *Vide* "Notes", 17-11-1921, under the sub-title "Brave Students".

and the Christian love peace more than strife. Indeed we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This mentality is at once our weakness and our strength.

Let us nurse the better, the religious part of the mentality of ours. "Let there be no compulsion in religion." Is it not religion with us to observe swadeshi and therefore wear khadi? But if the religion of others does not require them to adopt swadeshi, we may not compel them. We broke the universal law restated in the Koran. And the law does not mean that there may be compulsion in other matters. The verse means that if it is bad to use compulsion in religion about which we have definite convictions, it is worse to resort to it in matters of less moment.

We can only therefore argue and reason with our opponents. The extreme to which we may go is non-violent non-co-operation with them even as with the Government. But we may not non-co-operate with them in private life, for we do not non-co-operate with the men composing the Government, we are non-co-operating with the system they administer. We decline to render official service to Sir George Lloyd the Governor, we dare not withhold social service from Sir George Lloyd the Englishman.

The mischief, I am sorry to say, began among the Hindus and the Mussulmans themselves. There was social persecution, there was coercion. I must confess that I did not always condemn it as strongly as I might have. I might have dissociated myself from the movement when it became at all general. We soon mended our ways, we became more tolerant but the subtle coercion was there. I passed it by as I thought it would die a natural death. I saw in Bombay that it had not. It assumed a virulent form on the 17th.

We damaged the Khilafat cause and with it that of the Punjab and swaraj. We must retrace our steps and scrupulously insure minorities against the least molestation. If the Christian wishes to wear the European hat and unmentionables he must be free to do so. If a Parsi wishes to stick to his *fenta*[1] he has every right to do so. If they both see their safety in associating themselves with the Government, we may only wean them from their error by appealing to their reason, not by breaking their heads. The greater the coercion we use, the greater the security we give to the Government, if only because the latter has more effective weapons of coercion than we have. For us to resort to greater coercion than the Government will be to make India more slave than she is now.

[1] Traditional Parsi cap

Swaraj is freedom for everyone, the smallest among us, to do as he likes without any physical interference with his liberty. Non-violent non-co-operation is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it enforced. When there is complete freedom of opinion, that of the majority must prevail. If we are in a minority, we can prove worthy of our religion by remaining true to it in the face of coercion. The Prophet submitted to the coercion of the majority and remained true to his faith. And when he found himself in a majority he declared to his followers that there should be no compulsion in religion. Let us not again either by verbal or physical violence depart from the injunction, and by our own folly further put back the hands of the clock of progress.

Young India, 24-11-1921

209. TO THE CITIZENS OF BOMBAY[1]

BOMBAY,
November 26, 1921

By God's grace we are once more at peace. We are no longer engaged in the occupation of breaking one another's heads, throwing stones or burning buildings. Nevertheless some of us have still anger, bitterness and fear in us. This is evident from the language of numerous visitors and correspondents. We can call it a real peace only when our minds are free from these impurities. The first step towards such a consummation is that Hindus and Mussulmans make a clean confession of their guilt. Those who cast the first stone must be held guilty. If I begin by using an abusive word I must take the consequences of all that may follow. If Hindus and Mussulmans made the beginning by forcibly removing foreign caps or by throwing stones, they were the guilty party. Moreover, they are in an overwhelming majority. And it is largely Hindus and Mussulmans who have taken the pledge of non-violence. Therefore it is they who should realize their responsibility in the first instance.

I am not here considering the responsibility in law. I am simply thinking of it as between man and man. If Parsis and Christians do not feel their share of the guilt, it is difficult to establish a lasting peace. If Parsis and Christians had not retaliated when Hindus and Mussulmans began violence, they would have

[1] This appeared under the caption "Way to Peace" and with the introduction: "The following is the translation of a Gujarati appeal issued by Mr. Gandhi."

been considered angels, and they would have given to the world an astonishing proof of their soul-force. But they not only defended themselves, which was quite right, but they also were angered and went beyond the limits of self-defence. Some of them used greater violence than was necessary. And if they do not admit as much, it would be difficult to attain immediate heart-peace, because Hindus and Mussulmans will not acknowledge their complete innocence even after provocation. If only one party were to continue its guilt and the other consistently remained patient and suffering, the guilty party would be exhausted in the effort, if there was no reaction following action, the world would attain salvation. And generally we answer abuse with a slap. A slap is returned with a double slap. The latter is followed by a kick, the kick by a bullet, and so the circle of sin ever widens. But generally those who believe in taking a tooth for a tooth after a time forgive one another and become friends. Is it impossible for us to follow this common rule? I do not therefore hesitate to ask Parsi and Christian friends to recognize this rule of mutual forgiveness and forget one another's wrongs.

But I do lay stress upon the special responsibility that rests upon Hindus and Mussulmans. Whether the Parsis and the Christians forgive or not, Hindus and Mussulmans are bound to purify themselves by confessing their guilt, asking God for forgiveness and by remaining peaceful. Those who have suffered losses or are deprived of their dear ones are bound to feel the effect of the injury received. Some of them are too poor to bear the losses. We must appreciate their position. And I trust that there will be an impartial non-official committee appointed to investigate the losses suffered by those who cannot bear them and to collect the funds necessary for assisting them. At the same time I hope no one will seek the assistance of law or Government. This advice I tender not merely as a non-co-operator, but also from my wide experience that such matters are more truly and more expeditiously adjudicated by private arbitration. That is also the way to avoid acerbities. The easiest method of achieving peace is to give up the idea of complaining against one another in a court of law and to concentrate our attention upon taking preventive measures, so that there is no recurrence of such madness. And I hope that Bombay will retrieve her lost reputation by adopting such measures.

I remain,
Your servant,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-12-1921

210. MESSAGE TO MILL-HANDS OF BOMBAY[1]

[Before *November 27, 1921*]

MILL-HAND FRIENDS,

I do not know you personally but, having myself become a labourer for the sake of the labourers in the country, I am intimately connected with you. I desire that you should all report for work as soon as the mills open and never suspend work again unless permitted by the employers, nor take part in rioting any time in future.

Your well-wisher,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 27-11-1921

211. TO THE LIBERALS[2]

[*November 27, 1921*][3]

FRIENDS,

We are all so preoccupied with other affairs that the events in Malabar hardly attract the attention they deserve. The ending of the trouble has become a matter of great urgency. It is one of simple humanity. Be the Moplahs ever so bad, they deserve to be treated as human beings. Their wives and children demand our symapthy. Nor are they all bad. And yet there can be no doubt that many innocent men must have been adjudged guilty. Forcible conversions are horrible things. But Moplah bravery must command admiration. These Malabaris are not fighting for the love of it. They are fighting for what they consider is their religion and in the manner they consider is religious. The vast majority of them have nothing personal to gain by continuing their resistance. Their sin is not of deliberation, but ignorance.

If we permit the extermination of such a brave people, it will

[1] A leaflet carrying this message was distributed in the labour areas of Bombay.

[2] This appeared under the caption "About Moplahs".

[3] Released on this date

be remembered against us and will be accounted as Indian cowardice.

I make bold to say that had Mr. Yakub Hasan been allowed to go to Malabar, had I not been warned against entering Malabar, had Mussulmans of real influence been invited to go, this long drawn out agony could have been avoided.

But it is not yet too late.

The sword has been tried for three months, and it has failed to answer the purpose. It has not bent the proud Moplah. Nor has it saved Hindus from his depredations and lust. The sword has merely prevented the Moplah from overrunning the whole of the Madras Presidency. It has exhibited no power of protection.

I am sure you will not plead incapacity. It is true that the police and the military are not transferred subjects. But you cannot escape moral responsibility. You are suppporting the policy of the Government regarding Malabar.

Nor, I hope, will you retort by blaming the non-co-operators. They cannot admit any responsibility for the trouble at all, unless all agitation is to be held blame-worthy. I admit however that non-co-operators were not able to take their message to the Moplah homes. That would be a reason for more, not less, agitation.

But I have not taken up the pen to argue away non-co-operators' blame. I ask you to consider the broad humanities of the question, compel the Government to suspend hostilities, issue promise of free pardon for past depredations upon an undertaking to surrender, and to permit non-co-operators to enter Malabar to persuade the Moplahs to surrender. I know that the last suggestion means the giving of importance to non-co-operators. Surely you do not doubt their numbers or influence. If you do, you should find other means of dealing with the trouble than that of extermination. I am merely concerned with the termination of the shameful inhumanity proceeding in Malabar with both Liberals and non-co-operators as helpless witnesses. I have chosen to address this letter not to the Government but to you, because the Government could not have taken the inhuman course of destruction without your moral support. I beseech you to give heed to my prayer as of a dear friend.

I am,
Your friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 1-12-1921

212. TO BARDOLI—ANAND

SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF BARDOLI AND ANAND,

You have been shocked beyond words. You were nursing high hopes. You had taken up the challenge to win swaraj, heal wounds of your Muslim brothers and of the Punjab and secure the release of the Ali Brothers from jail—all in this year and through your sacrifices.

But God had willed otherwise. "If man had his way, none would suffer." This is the truth Narasinh[1] sang. We cannot command the result. All we can do is to aspire and strive. Even a man like Ramachandra was ordered, at the very hour when he was to be installed on the throne, to go and live in a forest. What are we, then?

I am thinking of the grief of my dear friend[2], my co-worker in the Punjab inquiry, whom I have seen shedding tears over the suffering of the Punjab, who, in old age, has started working like a young man, who having lived in comfort all his life, has renounced that life for your sake and mine and revelled in doing so. He is deeply pained at the thought that now he cannot send his Kaira District and specially his own Anand Taluka immediately to jail. Let me assure him and you all that the fruits of patience will be sweet.

No irreparable harm has been done. We have not lost the game. On the contrary, we have succeeded in turning pain into happiness. There was disturbance of peace for a while, but we seem to have recovered our peace. God has saved us from a great tribulation through a small infliction.

I have received one letter from Bardoli, another about Bardoli, and I have seen a third letter about Kaira. These three letters state that you are not ready in the right sense—either with regard to non-violence or about swadeshi. In one letter, the correspondent gives details of incidents and says that, in Bardoli, force has been used. Foreign caps have been snatched away, owners of liquor shops have also been persecuted and foul language has been freely used. In both the talukas, people wear khadi only for show. Many persons wear it when they go out but, in their houses, garments of foreign cloth fill the trunks and are seen hanging from the pegs. Women

[1] 1414-1479; saint-poet of Gujarat

[2] Abbas Tyabji

have adopted swadeshi even less than men. The letter about Kaira warns me that all that shines white is not milk, that there is much which does not meet the eye, is deliberately concealed. If anyone protests, poor soul, he is silenced.

I do not say that all this is true. There may be some exaggeration in it. But we learn a good deal from our critics. We would soon be free from our shortcomings if we learn to see us through their eyes. It is only others who can see our backs.

From you I expect the purest sacrifice. Only such offering is acceptable to God. During the waiting period we have got unsought, overcome all your shortcomings. Take up earnestly the holy work of spinning. See that in every home they daily spin good, strong yarn free from particles of cotton pods, that no one goes without food and that no home remains defiled with the filth of foreign cloth. Collect the figures I have suggested.

If you have forcibly taken away anybody's clothes, go and apologize to him. Harbour no resentment against those who may co-operate with the Government. Serve them when they are in distress. Do not flatter officials nor be afraid of them. Do not fear the police. Regard them as your brothers and love them. Withdraw your children from Government schools, if any are still attending them. Never use force for propagating non-co-operation. If there is even one person in your village who co-operates with the Government, bear him no ill will. Remember, instead, that he has as much right to hold his view as you yours.

If there are any disputes among the residents of your village, settle them. There can be no room for quarrelling in satyagrahi villages.

If contempt for *Dheds* and *Bhangis* is still lurking in your minds, shed it. Invite their children to attend your schools and treat them with love. Visit their quarters. Provide them facilities for water and other necessities, if these are absent. Do not give them your left-overs to eat. Raise their wages, instead, or give them uncooked grains.

If there are drink-addicts in your village, entreat them, beseech them to desist and thus save them from the evil. If they do not listen, let them drink. If there is a liquor booth in your village, plead with the owner gently. Do not get angry with him. Have compassion on him, instead.

If there are any bullies or habitual thieves in your village, do not be afraid of them either, nor intimidate them. Look upon them, too, as your brothers and show regard for them. In order to reform them, first understand their condition sympathetically and

then try to bring about a change of heart in them. At the same time, acquire the strength to protect yourselves, your families and your property from their depredations. For this purpose, appoint watchmen from among yourselves. They will never have to fight with the thieves. If there is a vigilant watch, thieves will not visit your locality. The saying that the vigilant need have no fear is quite true. Even then, it may happen that a ruffian will attack you. In that case, do not give way to fear. You ought to know all the bad characters of your taluka.

Anand, especially, is graced with the shrine of Dakorji. I described once[1] the state of things in this place. Anand Taluka could be said to be really fit only when you have reformed both the outer and the inner condition of the place. Has the dispute over the temple property been settled? Is the pond clean? Have the pilgrims ceased to be pilgrims in name only and become honest devotees? Have the evils ceased? Has the town become entirely clean? Has foreign cloth been banished from the temple? Do the people in your taluka still have to take their disputes to the law-courts?

Have no doubt that, if non-co-operators are true to their salt, if their hearts are filled with love, everyone will be won over by that love. I declare on oath that we can still win swaraj before the end of this year if your two talukas can fully implement all the items of the non-co-operation programme. And that is not a tall order either, if you but think about the matter. If you are all sincerely concerned, it is easy to fulfil the programme. It is, of course, a difficult matter if you have been working without proper understanding or with hatred in your heart, not love.

I have repeatedly said that non-co-operation springs from love, not hatred. Soul-force is love-force and the world is ruled by this force. If you want to free India through your strength, shower love on others. If you like being called the helper of the distressed, you must become the very images of tolerance, heroism, truth and other virtues. Mere show will never win us swaraj.

If you want to win swaraj this year, despite Bombay's error, you will have to bring about a far higher degree of self-purification than you have done so far. That means you will have to become true Hindus or Muslims or Parsis or Christians, as the case may be.

And never forget to show brotherly love for the Parsis and Christians living in your midst. You must remove their fears through your pure love for them.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVI, pp. 275-6.

Do not give up the hope you have placed in me, and see that I do not have to give up my hope in you. I will come to see you as early as possible. Meanwhile, press on with your preparations.

Your servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-11-1921

213. MY NOTES

AFTER THE FAST

I have started writing these Notes after ending my fast, while most of the material for *Young India* was written during the fast. I find no difference, however, between my thoughts then and now. The views I held before I commenced the fast remain unchanged.

ONE CHANGE

Only in one respect have I changed my view. That, again, is not due to the fast, but to what I myself saw in Bombay on Thursday the 17th instant and to the incidents on Friday and Saturday which were reported to me. I can now see that we are not yet ready for civil disobedience. To start it in Bardoli at present will only mean losing the game. The primary aim of civil disobedience is to win swaraj, secure justice on the Khilafat issue and make the Government of India apologize to the people for the Punjab incidents. It is certain that not a single one of the three aims can be gained through civil disobedience under the present circumstances. Bombay and Bardoli-Anand have such close links that each side wants to and can help the other. If we start civil disobedience in Bardoli and Anand and consequently Bombay turns violent, a little reflection is enough to show that not only will Bombay not help us, but that actually it will harm the cause. Undisciplined disobedience is nothing but the fullest co-operation with the Government. Have we still to learn that this Government is kept in power by our weakness, our habit of breaking laws at will and our violence? Even the non-co-operation of some lawyers has not weakened the Government as much as our remaining peaceful. Similarly, it is strengthened more by our violence than by the co-operation of the other pleaders, because our rioting gives it an opportunity for re-

pression, for starting a reign of terror and thereby consolidating its power. Thus, unruly behaviour at one place with civil disobedience at another is as futile as grinding corn in a quern and then collecting in a dish the flour as it comes out of it or soiling a piece of cloth immediately it has been washed. One may go on pouring water in a leaky jar, but not a drop will remain. In the same way, no amount of discipline exhibited in an atmosphere of violence will avail us. We must first create an atmosphere of discipline and peace throughout the country. Happily or unhappily for us, we make the claim that the whole of India is with us, with the non-co-operation movement. It is our claim that not only are the many lakhs enrolled on the Congress register with us, but that we have such influence over the crores outside that they too are with us. We must claim this. If the people are not with us, for whom are we to struggle and win swaraj? If they are with the Government, can we compel them to be free? Our present movement for swaraj and for the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs rests on our claim that we voice the people's grievances and that we are employing means which they have accepted, that is, that people want to win swaraj through peaceful methods.

If this belief of mine is not right, I, we, have committed a grave error. If those of us who have faith in non-violent means are only a handful, it means not that we can do nothing but that our plan should be different. In that case, non-co-operators being led to prison need not be followed by crowds. If, like those who co-operate with the Government, we too enjoyed no regard from the people, we could have offered civil disobedience to our heart's content, because then nobody would have violated peace in our name.

Difference

The civil disobedience, which we soon expected to start in Gujarat was to be offered on behalf of the whole country. We had hoped that, through it, we would win swaraj and strengthen the movement for Khilafat. Hence, it was necessary that the whole country should preserve peace and thus show its moral support. Apart from this, anyone may offer civil disobedience for a local grievance, as people are doing just now in Chirala-Perala and Mulshi Peta. We have even sympathy for the people in these places and we may help them if we can. In any case, we can remain neutral. But the effect of violence is so harmful that, if we impulsively start it in Bombay to show our sympathy with Chirala-Perala, the people there would have to suffer all the more.

GREATEST NEED

So the first and the greatest need of the hour is to see that an atmosphere of peace prevails everywhere. If we still have any doubt about the need for peace, we should shed it. We must get control over the *goondas*. They, too, are our brothers. We cannot disown them nor can we afford to submit to them. If we allow ourselves to be ruled by them, the country will not have swaraj but *goonda* raj. To let them rule is to destroy both themselves and us. We must know, however, that the public will not tolerate *goonda* raj even for a moment. Rather than incur the risk of immediate danger to life and property held by *goonda* raj, the public will instantly welcome the protection offered by the Government. We must, therefore, find out the *goondas*, discuss things with them in a friendly spirit, explain to them what is best for our dharma and our country and entreat them not to obstruct national work by their rioting. Let nobody suppose that all this will take a long time. It can be done in Bombay in a fortnight. I look upon the *goondas* as plain and simple folk misguided into wrong ways through their karma. We, in our blind selfishness, have led them into evil ways or kept them there. Hence, it should be easy for us to ensure that they do not interfere in this holy fight of ours. They can be persuaded to desist from their usual looting and fighting for the duration of the non-co-operation movement. If we cannot exercise even that much influence over them we shall prove ourselves unfit for swaraj. Suppose the British power left India; who then will protect us against the evil ways of the *goondas*? This is not to be decided after we have won swaraj. It is rather a pre-condition of our winning it that we answer the question now. If we cannot win them over through love, we certainly do not have the strength of arms to control them. Besides, a person like me would at any rate prefer to die at their hands rather than try to save his life by killing them.

DIFFICULTIES IN THIS

This change is easy to bring about, but there are difficulties in the way. At present, six different views prevail in the country.

1. People who believe that swaraj is impossible except through violence and bloodshed. They are, therefore, utilizing the pevailing atmosphere of peace to prepare for violence.

2. Those who think that our interests will be served through both the methods, of violence and of non-violence, used simultaneously, and so welcome incidents of violence. The aim of these people is not self-purification but only harassment of the Government.

3. Those who do not like a non-violent experiment anywhere to be abandoned because of continuing outbreaks of violence despite all efforts to check them.

4. Those who believe that we may attempt only what can be achieved with the Government's co-operation.

5. Those who accept the method of peace as an experiment, advocate it as a policy, and are unhappy inwardly while the experiment is in progress.

6. Those who work with the conviction that the method of non-violence is the only way for winning the country's freedom and bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, and disapprove of rioting by people, whether planned or unplanned.

A little reflection ought to show us that persons belonging only to the fifth and sixth categories help us and they alone will advance our cause. Persons of all other categories harm us. We have to win them over through gentleness, persuasion and service. The fourth category, of those who believe in co-operation, is not really so dangerous as to do us much harm. Moreover, we know who belong to this category; they have their own organization and carry on their activities in public. People in the first three categories have no organization, no institution or association to which they belong. They are scattered all over the country and influence the people whenever they can. As they are isolated individuals, it is difficult to reach them. But whenever there is trouble, they come out in the open and spread lawlessness among the people. When some of these, with an honest but a mistaken motive, infiltrate into non-co-operators' bodies, and propagate their own views through them, their activities become more harmful and dangerous. People of all these three categories were active in Bombay from Thursday to Sunday. That is why we used to hear all kinds of rumours and the very crowd which had come round and had started dispersing was persuaded by some other persons to collect again.

C.I.D.

Some people argue that all this was the work of the C.I.D. I completely refuse to believe this. It is true that the C.I.D. had a hand in the disturbances. Some members of the C.I.D. would not be happy unless there was trouble. But, besides the C.I.D., there were some persons with their own views and they also were inciting people; and the *goondas*, especially, whose very profession it is to loot and riot, were spreading wild rumours and doing their work.

ONLY ONE WAY

We have only one remedy. Our way is straight and clear. We must acquire influence over all these elements. If, when everyone is trying to make pawns of the people in their own game, the masses clearly see the wisdom of listening to non-co-operators only, they would never be eager to join a riot. Peace will spread and settle in the country when we have acquired such control. And the fact that peace has been established again indicates that we do have the power to restore it and preserve it. What is necessary is that we should be honest and energetic. We should have complete faith in the means we have adopted. We must be ever vigilant. The workers of Bombay forgot their responsibility and were caught napping. They assumed that the people of Bombay had now fully understood that there should be no violence. They, therefore, made strenuous preparations to organize the boycott of the functions to welcome the Prince of Wales, but did not simultaneously take the precautions to preserve peace which they should have done. With what result, we have seen. Be that as it may, one thing is certain. We can claim to have proved ourselves superior to the Government only when we remain peaceful despite C.I.D.'s tricks; only then can we rightly claim to be fit for swaraj. If we continue to deceive ourselves by shifting the blame to the police, we are sure to lose the battle. We cease to be soldiers, if, when the enemy batters us, takes us unawares, we complain that he will not let us win, gives us no breathing time even! We can hope to win only when we can prove that we have the strength to carry on the fight, let the enemy do what he will. As long as we cannot create an atmosphere in which we shall succeed in preserving peace despite anything the Government may do, we must give up all hope of winning the fight.

SELF-EXAMINATION

Our duty, therefore, is to see our own fault instead of blaming the police. Why did we turn out to be such simpletons that we believed all kinds of rumours? Did we not commit atrocities? Did we not snatch away foreign caps, set fire to tram-cars and liquor shops, join in rioting when we saw others rioting? Did we not entertain ugly thoughts in our minds, bear hatred for people who wanted to co-operate with the Government? If we did all this—and I myself saw that we did—then, with folded hands, we should pray to God for forgiveness, atone for our sin and take a solemn vow never to act in this way again. The saying, "Be good and the world will be good to you," contains a great truth. Because we

ourselves are impure and cowardly, we look upon officers and every policeman as our enemy. If we cast off fear, we would cease to fear policemen, whether in plain clothes or in uniform and would not be misled by anyone. We want to fight relying wholly on soul-force. This strength no one can give us. God alone can grant it. Let us overcome our weaknesses and we shall have won swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-11-1921

214. NOTES

Reverse of Truth

The Government of Bombay has contradicted my statement[1] to the effect that the police and the military took sides during the recent trouble and that not they but the citizens restored peace. I am sorry for the contradiction. I was unprepared for it. I must add to my charges a third now to complete the picture. The police or the military were powerless to protect the life and property of the citizens. On the seventeenth I observed that they could not prevent tram-cars and motors from being burnt. They could not prevent the liquor shop in Bhindi Bazar from being reduced to ashes. Nor did they do better on eighteenth or nineteenth. Incendiarism and looting went on unchecked. When anybody applied for protection, he was flatly told that they could not spare any more men, all hands being occupied in connection with the welcome to the Prince.

Could the police and the military possibly restore peace when they were able to protect none and nothing in the disturbed area? The credit for restoration of peace is not claimed for non-co-operators alone. I claim it for both co-operators and non-co-operators, for Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians including Englishmen. If all the peace-loving citizens had not joined, order could not have been restored. I claim the credit for Mian Chhotani. On the 20th instant but for Sir Pheroze Shethna who succeeded in inducing the military to stay their hands, a crowd would have been fired upon whereas it was dispersed within five minutes by the efforts of Dr. Pavri and Mr. Banker. I can multiply instances of such dispersal on behalf of the citizens irrespective of creed or party. Mrs. Naidu was often asked by the military to

1 *Vide* "A Deep Stain", 18-11-1921.

help disperse crowds. Indeed if co-operating and non-co-operating Parsis had not helped, it would have been impossible to restore peace. At the peace breakfast it was Mr. H. P. Modi who claimed the credit for the citizens. Though Mr. Purushottamdas administered a polite rebuke to the non-co-operators for the previous excitement, he did not disclaim the credit for the establishment of peace on behalf of the citizens. Mr. Natarajan too gave unstinted praise to those who had brought about the much-desired peace. Mr. K. T. Paul and Mr. Douglas did no less. Mr. Vimadalal in proposing thanks specially mentioned Mian Chhotani.

As to taking sides, whilst the police failed to protect the Parsis, many of the latter admitted to me that they looked on whilst Parsi hooligans were dealing destruction. But I do not wish to labour this point. I have no desire to blame individual members of the police or military. I hope one day to bring them over to the side of truth and innocence. Most are Indians, and I certainly do not despair of Englishmen too responding in the end if only non-co-operators will be true to their creed of non-violence. Credit may however be given for the forbearance of the police and the military in that they did not wantonly take life, they did not attempt terrorism. Let me close this chapter by instancing Malabar and Madras. Because the people are not permitted to work, the Malabar trouble is still going on; because people did not or could not work, murder in the strike area in Madras was rampant for close on two months. The Government of Bombay may, if they choose, claim the credit for refraining from interference with the the people who were trying to restore peace.

Who Was at the Bottom?

People were not wanting who persisted in saying that the whole trouble was engineered and kept up by the secret police. Throughout the six years I have been in India, I have been hearing such charges against the C.I.D. I have myself received the attentions of that body. But I am unable to subscribe to the wild rumours that are set afloat about it. I admit that it is corrupt, that many charges can be borne out, but there is much exaggeration in them. It would be terrible if they were all true. And it would be proof of our rank cowardice. Many things imputed to the department are possible only among the people bereft of personal bravery and self-respect. During the Bombay disturbances, responsible men credited the secret police with having set afloat all the rumours about assault on Mrs. Naidu, myself and others, about damage to mosques and churches, etc. The C.I.D. was re-

puted to have brought about the fires and the wrecking of tram-cars. I am unable to believe all these statements; and if they are true, the people of Bombay must be easily gullible and too foolish to exercise the rights of citizenship. Among the qualities required to enable us to attain swaraj is certainly ability to checkmate the C.I.D. If we can be easily incited to things that hurt us or induced to believe things we ought not to we can never gain our end. If we are openly and truly non-violent, we cannot possibly go wrong. Either the C.I.D. or we work upon the inflammable material in our midst. If we cannot keep it under control, we must bid good-bye to all idea of freedom in the near future.

Beware of Rumours

One of the many lessons to be learnt from the events is that we must never believe rumours and that we must have Congress and Khilafat offices in every ward or large street where people can verify rumours. If we are acting as one man with one mind—and we must if we are to succeed—we must learn never to act without thinking and on mere rumours. Three-fourths of the panic was caused by mischievous rumours. What does it matter if the people hear of temples destroyed or some big leader killed or injured? They may not act without advice. Does an individual soldier act on his own behalf on hearing of a general's death or of a desecration of his mosque or temple? If he were to act so, he would harm the cause and be liable even to be shot. It is much more necessary for us to act in concert when we are willing soldiers of peace and more capable of restraint than armed soldiers and when we have to win not a single battle but the freedom of our country and religions.

Obligatory Exaggeration

Exaggeration is always worthy of condemnation but there is one exception to the rule. It is obligatory in connection with our own faults. We are short-sighted regarding them, and they appear in their true bearing only when they are magnified a thousand-fold. We are long-sighted regarding other people's faults. Understatement in their case is therefore a necessity. And if we perform the two processes simultaneously and conscientiously, we are likely to arrive at the happy mean. Mussulman friends have quarrelled with my saying that theirs was the leading part in the riots. And both they and the Hindus have taken exception to my statement that they were the aggressors and therefore the guilty party. I have given the greatest consideration to both the objections and

have come to the conclusion that I must adhere to my original statement. We shall never cleanse ourselves, unless we know the whole truth against ourselves. I would be untrue to the Mussulmans if I did not say what I knew or felt, and I would be no Hindu, if for fear of losing Hindu esteem or otherwise I did not tell the truth. Needless to say it is no part of my business to consider the legal consequences of such statements. The Government may do what it chooses. If the Parsis and Christians are wise, they will not play into its hands. But as a non-co-operator I am unconcerned with legal consequences. Those who did damage were non-co-operators, sympathizers or mere mischief-makers. The first two must feel delighted, if innocent, to be imprisoned, for we court imprisonment of the innocent. If they have done wrong, they need not be sorry for punishment. The mischief-makers need not expect protection from me. Therefore the best protection I am capable of giving, the best service I am capable of rendering is to tell the truth in utter disregard of consequence. It is not possible on any other terms to carry on this great struggle affecting crores of people in which you are always dealing with novel situations and uncertain elements. Our only infallible weapons in the midst of such uncertainties are truth and non-violence.

Fear of Imprisonment

Much though we have advanced in shedding fear of imprisonment, there is still a disinclination to seek it and an anxiety to avoid it. We must remain scrupulously honest and non-violent, and at the same time be anxious almost to find ourselves in the jails of the Government. It must be positively irksome if not painful for us to enjoy so-called freedom under a Government we seek to end or mend. We must feel that we are paying some unlawful or heavy price for retaining our liberty. If therefore when being innocent we are imprisoned, we must rejoice because we must feel that freedom is near. Is not freedom nearer for the imprisonment of hundreds who are now cheerfully undergoing it for the sake of the country? What can be better for non-co-operators of Bombay than that though innocent, they should be imprisoned for the sake of the guilty?

A Pure Heart

But my remarks will be appreciated only by those who have changed hearts,—not by those Hindus and Mussulmans who still believe that the Parsis or the Christians were more in the wrong than the Hindus and the Mussulmans. The many letters of protest I have received show that many Hindus and Mussulmans believe

the Parsis and the Christians gave the first offence. Althouth I know the contrary, I am prepared to assume that they did. Are not Hindus and Mussulmans still bound by virtue of their pledge, of their numbers and of their religion not to retaliate but to befriend and protect them even if they have to go out of their way to do it?

Maulana Bari's "Fatva"

Let Maulana Abdul Bari speak. I offer no apology for reproducing the *fatva* he issued on learning the particulars about the Bombay disturbances :

> We do not at all desire to inflict any insult or bodily harm on the Prince of Wales. We only wish to save him from being deceived by official prestige and to show him the real feelings of India and its people. The means we have adopted is to declare a hartal from which all violence should be excluded. . . .
>
> We consider the Bombay riots to be opposed not only to our political creed but also to our *shariat*. . . if such disturbances are not prevented in future, the minorities will no longer have faith in Indian democracy. . . .

Rights of Minorities

Unless therefore we remove the last trace of ill will against Parsis, Christians or Jews, we shall fail in our purpose. The condition of such protection is not that minorities accept our political or other opinion. That would be no protection. Protection to be true has to be given in spite of the dissent, even opposition of minorities. Indeed we must jealously guard the rights of minorities if we are to have perfect freedom of opinion in the country. Even a child must be able to express its opinion freely. The rule of majority would be a barbarous imposition, if it were utilized to crush the minority. What we want in a free India is not a dead level but a variety of opinion and conduct in which the sanest will prevail by the weight not of might but of right. We have been groaning too long under the weight of authority. And the weight of majority can be as brutal as that of the bullets of a minority. We must therefore be patient with our Parsi or Christian brother if we will be free. I see in the blind prejudice against the Parsis and the Christians a menace to Hindu-Muslim unity itself. If we cannot tolerate Parsi or Christian difference, what guarantee is there that Hindus, if they felt the superiority of their brute strength, would not impose their will upon the Mussulman minority, or the Mussulmans, if they believed themselves to be capable of wielding

superior brute strength, would not crush the weak Hindu in spite of his numerical superiority?

An Echo from Bengal

Here is an apposite letter from Bengal written by a friend who knows what he is talking about. He says:

> I desire to tell you, that if civil disobedience is begun in Eastern Bengal, the consequences will be much more serious. The Mussulmans there number more than 70 per cent of the total population. The majority of them are turbulent. As soon as the passions of these men are roused, they will fall upon the Hindus, commit horrible outrages and terrorize the Hindu landlords and creditors. The saner and the more respectable section among them will fail to control the turbulent. Hindu-Muslim unity will vanish at the first touch. In Calcutta too the state of things will be extremely bad. I earnestly request you to take a much less optimistic view of men and things in India. Excuse me for saying that you know more of men and things of South Africa than of men and things in the parent country. You seem now to be against starting civil disobedience. But if you change your mind, I cannot look upon the results except with a feeling of horror or dismay. Your noblest ideals will be shattered to pieces and the country will be a prey to greater oppression and trouble. What you have done during these years will be undone.

This is not the only warning of the kind received by me. Bombay is one of the greatest nerve centres. It has naturally therefore stirred people. The protection of the rights of minorities means the protection of the weak. And protection of the weak means protection of old men, children and women and all those who may be helpless. And if today the united strength of Hindus and Mussulmans is used against Parsis and Christians, tomorrow the unity will break under the strain of cupidity or false religiousity,—not a delectable picture of swaraj by any means. For India, there is no alternative to non-violence, complete and true, if she is to be free. Non-violence then, must not be used as a preparation for violence. To realize this is to realize swaraj and religion. Let the Hindus and the Mussulmans beware of misreading their *Gita* or Koran. And by way of trial let them use their joint strength to protect the minorities and they will learn to protect one another.

Not Policy but Creed

And this cannot be done unless the year's experience teaches us to regard non-violence as our *final creed for the attainment and retention of India's freedom and of the unity of all the sects and denomi-*

nations of India. This still leaves each community free to fight for the preservation of its religion, and all together to fight for India's defence. But non-violence must not be a policy or expedient to be tried for gaining India's freedom or consolidating unity. Hindus and Mussulmans must therefore begin by loving and serving Parsis, Jews and Christians including Englishmen, whether they are co-operators or other. And if we are to do this, our speeches must be free from bitterness and in the process of conversion, we must not touch even a child in order to remove its foreign cap, nor use force against drunkards to wean them from drink. We must rest our cause solely upon appeal to reason, to the head and the heart, never to brute force whether verbal or physical. When we have millions of the people of India freely and intelligently on our side, we have swaraj. The greatest fear of co-operators is that non-violence is a cloak for violence and that in spite of the effort of the well-meaning, the movement is bound ultimately to pass into the hands of the unruly and the turbulent. We cannot dispel this fear by argument. We can only do so by an unbroken chain of facts which need no proof. Whilst we have made much headway, we cannot claim that we have neither speech nor action to our debit. Love, charity, humility, gentleness do not need any articulate proof. We must therefore put greater stress on non-violence and less on non-co-operation. Non-violence *is* non-co-operation. The Government's haven of refuge is violence. Is ours non-violence? Have we finally withdrawn ourselves from their school of violence? It is their greatest educational institution. The day we demolish the prestige of violence in its entirety, that day we establish swaraj. And to be able to do this, we must learn to love the Englishman whilst we hate his system under which he pretends to govern India. In the words of Maulana Abdul Bari we have no quarrel with the Englishman, we quarrel with his rule of force.

Practical Hints

If then we love our opponents, our love must show itself in our actions. We must invite them to our platforms and give them a patient and courteous hearing, we must not revile them in speaking of them, we must not cry "shame" when we hear their names, we must render them social service as readily as we would render to those who agree with us. All we may not do is to render them political service or give them political association. We must avoid all exciting speeches and avoid all noises : *Mahatma Gandhi ki jai* and other sounds should be strictly forbidden. We must be

able to conduct our meetings without such noises. And if we do not attract vast crowds without such noises we shall fare all the better without them. I would regard a district or tahsil that cannot be brought under such restraint to be unfit for civil disobedience. Picketing should be regarded with the gravest suspicion. There is no doubt that it has not everywhere been of a strictly non-violent nature. There has been verbal violence or a show of violence. It is better therefore to suspend picketing at least for the time being or till we have attained much greater self-control and gained greater experience. We may confine our attention just now to working among the drinking class.

Hartals

The hartals wherever the Prince is taken may be proclaimed if absolute peace can be guaranteed and compulsion of any kind whatever avoided. If the tram-cars run, we must not interfere with them. If the people use them, we know that they do not want to join us. If a single man wishes to keep his shop open, we must protect him in his freedom. It has a great value only if it is strictly voluntary.

Parsis and Christians

Parsis and Christians of Bombay have before them a time of great trial and temptation. It is just possible that they will be tempted to file complaints against Hindus and Mussulmans. It will be a fatal blunder to succumb to the temptation. They ought to rise to the occasion and refrain from seeking relief or reparation through courts of law. Quarrels are sometimes inevitable in spite of the best of precautions. They know that the sanest element among Hindus and Mussulmans deeply regret the unfortunate quarrel and are ashamed of the Hindu and Mussulman aggression. Parsis and Christians should now seek only such relief as a non-official committee can secure for them. Whilst it is true that Hindus and Mussulmans must keep their heads cool even if the latter seek reparation through the Government, they will put a severe strain upon human nature if they prefer official action to non-official.

Of the Government

Correspondents, whilst congratulating me for apologizing to the Parsis, Christians and Jews, have rebuked me for not doing likewise by the Government. In making the suggestion, they have missed the central point of apology. I cannot apologize to a system of its *administrators* when that system is responsible for the troubles at least equally with, if not more than, non-co-operators.

I start with the assumption that the administrators of the system relish these troubles and invite them by providing for them first in the way of giving provocation by unpopular measures and secondly by making *frightful* preparations to crush any outburst of popular resentment. Apology has been tendered to administrators as men inasmuch as it has been tendered to Christians, Englishmen and co-operators. I have said that inasmuch as non-co-operators insulted a single person who took part in the welcome to the Prince, they insulted the Prince and broke the pledge of non-violence. I am not aware of non-co-operators having in any shape or form injured the Government during the three disgraceful days. On the contrary I feel and know that the misguided mischief-makers strengthened the Government. The reader will see that apology to a Government which has been served or has benefited would be an inappropriate act. One of my minor objects is to injure the Government as a system and therefore the status of its administrators. But this I do by remaining strictly non-violent and dissociating myself from it in every possible and non-violent manner and by inducing others to do likewise. Indeed, if non-violence became the common creed of both the Government and the people, there would be little room for any quarrel ending in non-co-operation.

More Notable Imprisonments

Maulana Sherar was an effective speaker in the Madras Presidency and a staunch Khilafat worker. He was also a good writer. The Madras Government have silenced this worker for one year. The Punjab Government have arrested Pandit Nekiram Sharma who is not unknown to Bombay audiences and who was instrumental in saving precious lives when on the 17th instant a liquor shop was reduced to ashes in Bhindi Bazar. Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande has got six months' simple imprisonment. I had hoped that he and others would not be permitted to rest beyond the end of the year. The Bombay occurrences seem to have dashed my hopes to pieces. Before then I was certain either of our ability to unlock the prison gates or at least of joining the comrades in their rest-houses. Now—? God alone can tell.

Arrest of Brave Sikhs

A telegram in *The Bombay Chronicle* shows that the Punjab Government have goaded the Sikhs to civil disobedience. The Government had prohibited a Sikh divan that was to be held at Amritsar. This proved too much for the Sikhs. They held the divan with the result that eleven noted Sikhs have been arrested. Among these are the veteran Sardar Khadag Singh, President

Gurudwara Committee, Sardar Bahadur Mehtab Singh who recently resigned on the Gurudwara question the Deputy Presidentship of the Punjab Council and Government pleadership, also Sardar Dan Singh, President Amritsar City Congress Committee. If the Sikhs continue to remain calm and yet firm, then the incarceration of the Sikh leaders must bring about the desired solution of the Gurudwara question.

STRIKES

When hartal takes place what should mill-hands and other employees do, who cannot get leave from their unsympathetic or alien employers? In terms of non-violence there can be but one answer. An employee who gives himself leave uses violence, for he commits a criminal breach of the contract of his service. He cannot absent himself without the permission of his employer. All he can do is to resign if he is not satisfied with his employer. But this too a body of employees may not do all of a sudden. For they may not in order to enforce their political opinion threaten to leave without due notice. In short mill-hands and such other employees should not be encouraged to coerce their employers into giving leave. Non-violent action is not quite so simple as one may imagine. I have heard men describing as non-violent the holding tight of the legs of persons proceeding to drink-shops. Similarly youngsters have classed foul abuse of liquor dealers among non-violent acts. This is merely playing with language and bore bitter fruit in Bombay. We must be true to ourselves if we wish to give non-violence a fair trial. Even if we cannot make our thought non-violent, we must so regulate our speech and action as to make them completely innocuous. If we find it impossible or too difficult to practise, we must give up the attempt but we must not blame one of the greatest doctrines of life for our incapacity. If failure has to be written against us, it won't be failure of non-violence but of the violent to respond to it.

AN ANDHRA DEFINITION

Swaraj has been variously defined. Mr. Gopal Krishnayya who has been tried a second time and sentenced to undergo further imprisonment to run concurrently with the first made a long statement before the Magistrate. It is more a theological discussion of his belief than a statement of his political creed. It certainly shows that there was neither violence nor incitement to it in the speech that was the subject matter of prosecution. But I am concerned only with his interesting definition of swaraj. Here it is:

> It is not the common political suffering that is to weld together the Hindu and the Muslim like the Greeks of old during the Persian invasions, but the mutual respect, regard and love for each other's dharma. . . . and the necessity for its individuated preservation that can and shall achieve it. Swaraj, therefore, means the preservation of Hindu dharma, Muslim dharma, Christian dharma, Parsi dharma, Sikh dharma, in short *swadharma* of all and a co-ordinated federation of all, which are now being threatened with destruction by positivist godless philosophy, industrial anarchy and spiritual famine that beset the world at the present moment.

Surely we are nearing our goal when men of character are being imprisoned for their religious beliefs.

Sardar Gurdut Singh

It is no small matter for one to remain in hiding for seven years and escape the police and then openly to surrender oneself to them, yet Sardar Gurdut Singh has succeeded in preforming the wonder. I have before me his open letter and other papers. In the midst of other diversions these papers do not attract me. But I cannot withhold my congratulations from the Sikhs for their having kept their peace when Sardar Gurdut Singh surrendered himself and the Magistrate took charge of him. We must be certain of non-violence to such an extent that we may undertake the boldest steps with perfect confidence. There is nothing to beat swadeshi to make us non-violent. I entirely agree with a correspondent who sends me a long letter saying that I should insist upon due fulfilment of swadeshi before a single tahsil embarks upon civil disobedience. I know that violence would be an impossibility if the whole of India became swadeshi, i.e., carried out complete boycott of foreign cloth by manufacturing the whole of the khadi supply in her millions of cottages. Would that the Sikhs and other Indians simply concentrate upon manufacture of hand-spun yarn and hand-woven cloth.

Ten Days for the Khadi Cap

The khadi cap came in for much attention during the late disturbance in Bombay. Dr. Sathe was severely assaulted because he would not surrender his khadi cap. Now I hear that sailors in the Fort forcibly dispossessed many innocent wearers of their khadi caps. I can only hope that this senseless persecution will stiffen the resolve of the nation and that thousands will be prepared to die for the khadi cap which is fast becoming a visible mark of swadeshi and swaraj. The most glaring instance however comes from Bengal.

Mr. T. H. Ellis, S.D.O. of Brahmanbaria District, Comilla, Bengal, issued on the 16th instant the following notice:

> The Government has decided that the wearing of what are called Gandhi caps constitutes an offence under section 228 I.P.C. Gentlemen are warned that this order will be enforced.

Consequently a volunteer who wore a khadi cap in spite of the order was fined Rs. 10/- which he refused to pay. He preferred to go to jail for ten days. I reproduce below the Section 228:

> Whoever intentionally offers any insult or causes any interruption to a public servant while such public servant is sitting in any stage of a judicial proceeding, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or both.

Thus the wearing of a khadi cap is henceforth to constitute an insult to a public servant in Bengal! I hope that the S.D.O. has arrogated to himself powers that have never been given to him or any other magistrate by the Bengal Government. In any event if the order is at all general, bare-headed Bengal will soon begin to patronize khadi caps if only out of sheer sense of self-respect. I congratulate the volunteer who has been the first to receive the honour of imprisonment for the offence of wearing a khadi cap.

Pussyfoot's Certificate

I was agreeably surprised to receive the following from Pussyfoot. I had hoped to have the privilege of meeting Dr. Johnson but our programme always clashed. It is therefore special satisfaction for me to be able to receive a letter from him acknowledging our temperance work:

> MY DEAR MR. GANDHI,
>
> While sailing away from your country, my mind keeps going back to the wonderful work that you are doing for the temperance cause in India and, consequently, for the whole world. . . .
>
> Please present my kind recollections to your good wife and your brother with whom I did have the privilege of a little visit.
>
> *Cordially yours,*
> W. E. Johnson
>
> At Sea,
> *November 19, 1921*

I can share the letter with the reader without blushing for the simple reason that I can claim no credit for the work which Dr. Johnson truly calls wonderful. It has not even taken two

years to accomplish what has been done. But the credit belongs to a multitude of unknown workers who fired by the religious nature of the movement spontaneously took up temperance work. I wish that such glorious work had not been marred by the wanton and violent burning of liquor shops in Bombay. Let me hope that all trace of compulsion will be removed from the reform and that we shall soon see an India become voluntarily dry.

IMPLICATIONS OF REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

I take the following from the letter of a Bengali friend:

> You have placed the removal of untouchability in the fore-fiont of the programme of national work. But you have not, so far as I am aware, given any clear explanation as to what exactly you intend it to mean. The question of intermarriage apart, it may be taken to mean any one of three possible courses. It may mean either not considering the touch of a man ceremonially unclean or agreeing to take water at his hands or not refusing to partake of food, more particularly rice, prepared by him.

I can generally answer the question by saying that removal of untouchability means disappearance of a fifth caste. It therefore does mean at least that mere touch of a man shall not be regarded as a pollution. The so-called untouchable should enjoy the same freedom that the touchables do. Generally speaking therefore water handled by the erstwhile untouchable will not be regarded as polluted. Removal of untouchability does not include partaking of rice or other food cooked by the untouchable or any other. That is a matter of reform in the institution of caste and not covered by the programme about untouchability. Restrictions about marriage and inter-dining may be undesirable and may require modification. But I do not regard them as a blot upon Hinduism, as I do untouchability. The latter puts a class of human beings beyond the pale of social service and therefore is an inhuman institution.

Young India, 1-12-1921

215. A PROTEST

The Editor
YOUNG INDIA

SIR,

I accept in the right spirit the stern rebuke which you have been pleased to administer to me in *Young India* of the 10th instant[1] as coming from a wise and sagacious general to an erring soldier; but you will, I pray, permit me a few words of mild remonstrance. It was not very pleasant to read your strong remarks, but it was positively painful to find that in writing about me in the way you had done you had been less than just to your own great self. That calm dignity, that scrupulous fairness to the worst opponent, that flowing charity and that sweet reasonableness which are such conspicuous features of your method of controversy were unfortunately very nearly absent in this particular instance.

I was convinced that our meeting at Delhi in spite of the President having adjourned it was a defiance of constitutional proprieties. . . that the Bengal and Madras members had no right to be there in view of the President's ruling that their election was void. . . . I felt that the Working Committee was . . . fast constituting itself into a power behind the throne. I saw with dismay that the All-India Congress Committee in its admiration for the great personalities who adorn the Working Committee was not only gifting away to that body one after another of its own powers, but what was worse, those also of the President's without the latter's permission and against his will reducing him thereby to the position of a mere puppet. . . . My whole soul rebelled against this topsy-turveydom. I do not think that the Congress Constitution contemplates the President as a mere figure-head whom the Working Committee can order about as it likes. He owes his office to the choice of the nation. He derives his authority directly from the Congress and he embodies, in the theory of the Constitution, the collective wisdom and authority of the entire body of delegates. His is the sole right of interpreting and construing the Congress Constitution and his rulings in these matters as also on questions of procedure are final and conclusive; this is not to say that his rulings are always correct, but the way to set them right is not by dealing a death blow to the dignity of the President's office as was done at Delhi. . . . Your severe castigation far from shaking my conviction has made it stronger. . . . to characterize my attitude as obstruc-

[1] *Vide* "The All-India Congress Committee", 10-11-1921.

tion is to utter the language of prejudice; to pour ridicule over honest differences of opinion . . . and to suggest that anybody came all the way from Bombay to Delhi at considerable inconvenience and no little expense simply to amuse and to be amused is perhaps the most unkindest cut of all, and, if I may say so, not in the true Gandhian vein.

I dare say your reference to the Maharashtra party is intended to be complimentary, but I am certain that it will not be read as such even outside Maharashtra. Speaking for myself . . . I venture to state—not in the spirit of idle boasting but of meek gratefulness—that the whole district where my humble lot had been cast will entirely repudiate your estimate of my mentality, and you yourself will some day realize with pain that you had dealt unjustly with a humble follower and co-worker. . . .

HARVEY ROAD, *Yours, etc.,*
BOMBAY, JAMNADAS M. MEHTA
November 17, 1921

I gladly find room for Mr. Mehta's protest. I can assure him that I meant no offence but that my remarks were made with perfect goodwill. If Mr. Mehta was absolutely serious about his objection, I must be pardoned for saying that I could see no argument in his speech. But I entirely accept Mr. Mehta's assurance about his seriousness.

Young India, 1-12-1921

216. TO CORRESPONDENTS

A. MAHOMED YASIN: The Ulemas' Conference Lahore has passed a resolution condemning forcible conversions. I agree with you that Moplahs and Hindus of Malabar have hitherto lived as friends and that the trouble would not have arisen but for the rashness and negligence of the Collector.

C. V. Naidu asks :

1. Are the taxes to the municipalities and local boards also not to be paid when such institutions are thrust on the people as in the case of Chirala?

If civil disobedience for local relief is resorted to, it would be legitimate to withhold payment of such taxes and it would be equally legitimate to withhold them if ratepayers in a particular area adopt that form of civil disobedience for swaraj. Obviously the second mode would be wholly inapplicable where a municipality is popularly elected and where there is no non-co-operation

with regard thereto. In every case retention of non-violent atmosphere is presumed.

2. Can a non-co-operator seek to enter the municipalities and local boards as an elected member?

Non-co-operators are as a matter of fact entering the municipalities all over India, particularly where there is a prospect of non-co-operation majority.

3. Do you think that Southern India with its untouchability is fit for adopting any form of civil disobedience? (Andhra is excluded; only Tamil is intended.)

If no part of Tamil India gives up the sin of untouchability it cannot be qualified for the exercise of the privilege of civil disobedience.

A PARSI: Much as I dislike vaccination, I must resist the temptation of opening the columns of *Young India* for the advertisement of what friends call my numerous fads. Vaccination and such other evils have to await solution till we begin to breathe the breath of freedom.

Young India, 1-12-1921

217. IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY

My letter to the Liberals[1] speaks for itself. In it I have not touched upon unproved or one-sided accounts of the happenings in Malabar. But I have before me correspondence which mentions inhumanities before which the Punjab ones dwindle into insignificance. The asphyxiation of prisoners is the most startling though by no means the most callous among the inhumanities that are said to be enacted in impenetrable Malabar. The Hindu mind is blinded by prejudice fed by interested accounts. I do not deny forcible conversions or other atrocities by the Moplahs. But my soul refuses to revenge itself upon innocent Moplahs or upon the women and children of the guilty ones, nor can I delight in torturing those who have done wrong. Such reprisals are not human.

Let me not go into further narration of facts or allegations. I only plead for calmness. What is the Government doing? Why has it proved so powerless for protection? Or is its function confined only to reprisals and isolating the Moplahs and their prey, the Hindus?

[1] *Vide* "To the Liberals", 27-11-1921.

Grant that the non-co-operators started the mischief by exciting the Moplahs against the Government, are non-co-operators keeping up the flame of Moplah passion? Are they preventing the Government from stamping out the rebellion? Why will the Government not grant permits to non-co-operators to go and plead with the Moplahs? Let them be shot if they turn traitors to their pledge. Let the Government take hostages for good conduct. It is utterly inhuman to persist in wanton destruction and desolation when a possible way is open to them and when non-co-operators have offered under certain conditions to go and attempt to bring about peace.

Though the task of conciliation has been certainly rendered most difficult, I do not despair of success, if full facilities are offered to non-co-operators to enter the disturbed area and reason with the Moplahs. Their valour, however misguided it is, is worthy of better treatment.

I do beseech the Hindus of the Madras Presidency to become calm and find room for the misguided Moplahs in their hearts. Their religion does not teach them to condemn whole classes of people for the faults of a few. Let them too bear their share of burden. They knew the Moplah and sinfully neglected to make him a better neighbour. We are reaping the reward of our past neglect. Let us not now indiscriminately condemn the Moplah as a fiend unworthy of human sympathy. Islam has undoubtedly suffered for the brutalities practised by the Moplahs, but Hinduism is suffering equally with Islam for thirsting for Moplah blood. It is bad enough for one to commit rape or murder, but it is equally bad if not worse to seek to flay the rake or murderer and to rape his womenfolk and murder the rest of his family. I do not know that the rake or the murderer cannot plead sudden passion as an extenuating circumstance. Can the seeker after unbridled revenge plead anything in palliation? Let not the Hindus by their thirst for Moplah blood justify Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. If we may resort to frightfulness and humiliations in respect of the Moplahs, do we not justify the action of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer who under a sense of fancied wrong and fear resorted to terrorism in the Punjab? The Hindu passions are, I fear, being exploited by the Government to keep up the Malabar trouble. Let Hindus of Malabar and Madras beware!

Young India, 1-12-1921

218. DISBANDMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

Bombay has given a handle to the Provincial Governments for undertaking systematic repression and attempting to snuff out non-co-operation. The notifications of the Bengal, the U.P., the Punjab and the Delhi Governments disbanding volunteer organizations are an answer to Bombay. I for one welcome these notifications. They obviate the necessity for forcing civil disobedience. If we are ready for the Government challenge, we can have an immediate trial of strength. It is one of the beauties of civil disobedience that a civil resister can choose his own time of battle. For he need not disobey till he thinks it is right for him to do so. No amount of provocation by the Government can goad him into disobedience.

If therefore the provinces where the notifications have been issued are ready, they have merely to refuse to disband and every one of the volunteers must surely find himself in jail. But we must be sure of our ground. The allegation against the corps is that they are assemblies to use force and not to keep peace. Our first duty is to examine the charge and purge ourselves of guilt if there is any in us. Every volunteer who has been guilty of using force or even threat of force by word or act must be relieved of his charge.

The resolution of the Working Committee[1] regarding volunteers has come in time though quite by accident. I hope that it will be taken up in every province by the respective Congress and Khilafat organizations and that all volunteer organizations will be combined into one and no volunteer will be retained who does not believe in non-violence. Then we may give battle if there is interference with these organizations. The condition, however, of giving battle is that when imprisonments commence, the rest remain quiet and peaceful. It is high time that we went to jail without noise or fuss. If we believe in the virtue of silent suffering we must make it easy for the Government to arrest us. It becomes difficult when each time we want to make a show and have a procession. Imprisonments must become an every-day occurrence. We make no fuss when we go out for a walk or a picnic. I do ask for the same indifference about going to jails. I accept Mr. Jayakar's formula of statement before the court. If there

[1] Passed at Bombay on November 23, 1921

is a choice between making or not making statements, I have no hesitation in giving my vote against making them. Imprisonments must cease to cause sensation, for the latter creates excitement and excitement may lead to violence. Violence interferes with a ceaseless flow of innocent imprisonments.

Retention of non-violent atmosphere is more important than imprisonments. Therefore no province will be justified in taking the risk of an outbreak of violence and precipitating imprisonments by disregarding the orders of disbandment. We shall lose nothing in the long run by waiting to stabilize non-violence. Our capacity for swaraj consists in our anticipating and thwarting every plan to lead us unto violence whether it be through the C.I.D. or any other channel.

Young India, 1-12-1921

219. *TO CORRESPONDENTS*

D. V. Rao asks :

1. Do you believe Krishna was wrong in not having preached the doctrine of non-violence to Arjuna? Or was he right in advocating war and violence?

In my opinion the *Bhagavad Gita* is a purely religious, not historical, treatise. It has taken a historical and secular incident to build up a grand religious doctrine. It deals with the war that is eternally waging between the forces of evil and good, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Hyde and Jekyll in the human breast. We cannot do enough violence to all the evil passions that well up on that little Kurukshetra. Historically considered the *Bhagavad Gita* tends to show that Arjuna having made the choice could not, yielding to false sentiment, withdraw from the battle. The author of the *Gita* never advocated war or violence. It is a sermon on non-violence. Fight without anger and passion can only be spiritual.

2. Did Rama err and sin in resorting to violence against Ravana to recover Sita? Or is violence justifiable only under special circumstances? If so what are those conditions?

I look upon the *Ramayana* in the same light as the *Bhagavad Gita*. The weapons that Rama used were purely spiritual. The victory of Rama over Ravana is a celebration of the victory of good over evil, of humility over arrogance, of a weak and virtuous woman with the help of God over man turned beast.

X, Y. Z, asks:

1. How long are we to be non-violent, supposing the Government tried to molest us in wicked ways?

Certainly till we have disarmed the Government. When we took the pledge we did not expect the Government to let us down gently.

2. If we get swaraj how are we to be protected against invasions of foreign nations?

You must see the old files of *Young India.* But generally it may be stated that we need not apprehend any trouble from foreign powers, but if they invade us without any offence on our part, we must trust to our capacity for suffering to be able to defend ourselves against all aggressors.

3. Will the feudatory States retain their rule?

Certainly. We have no design upon them. They will have more real power than they have now. They will naturally be amenable then to the pressure of public opinion whether within or without their borders.

4. Are you going to proclaim a republic if you are successful in civil disobedience? Maulana Shaukat Ali expressed such opinion.

Civil disobedience of the fierce type contemplated at Delhi by me has been knocked on the head by Bombay for some time to come. In any case I do not think that non-co-operators have so far consolidated their power or done so much constructive work as to warrant the declaration of an effective republic at the end of the year. In no case does it rest with one man to proclaim or not to proclaim a republic.

5. Will you give compensation to the Parsis who have been principally the mischief-mongers?

You evidently beg the question by calling Parsis "the mischief-mongers". I am firmly convinced that Hindus and Mussulmans started the mischief. I shall certainly hope that Parsis and Christians will be patriotic enough not to seek compensation through the Government and that there will be a non-official committee consisting of impartial co-operators and non-co-operators to receive and inquire into the claims for compensation by all private persons who might have suffered during the unfortunate disturbance.

Young India, 1-12-1921

220. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

Thursday [*December 1, 1921*]

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter yesterday in Ahmedabad. Now I hear you are laid up in bed. Soldiers are not permitted to get ill! You must therefore be up and doing quickly. Your health and strength are today of paramount importance and you cannot be spared for a single day. This is to make you quickly better but not make you leave your bed prematurely. Please give yourself all the rest you need so that there is no relapse. Haste in such matters is waste.

According to your instructions I have written down an appeal to the *Dharalas*[1] which I have handed to Mr. Fulchand.

I hope to be in Bardoli up to Saturday evening and then go to Bombay hoping to return by Thursday at the latest. And then if you are better and wish it, I shall give you two or three days for Kheda. Our preparation must be solid and substantial. Swadeshi must take deep root, untouchability must go in reality and Hindu-Muslim unity must be true. All this is impossible without a truly non-violent spirit.

My love to the whole family and prayers for your health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9597

221. SPEECH AT BARDOLI

[*December 3, 1921*][2]

He said he had nothing but the heartiest congratulations to offer to the people of the taluk from what he had been able to see within the two days of his stay. It was a great tribute to the people that they had gone such a long way in removing the bar of untouchability from their minds and the general standard of peace they had maintained did them the greatest credit. But it was not without the deepest regret that he learned that much had been

[1] A community in Gujarat

[2] This is a summary of Gandhiji's speech reported to have been made "just before he left Bardoli taluka" on Saturday, i.e., December 3; *vide* the preceding item.

left to be desired in the matter of swadeshi which was the very essence. They were still dependent on outside generosity for their khaddar, which showed that weaving had not yet accompanied spinning in the villages. This was necessarily a serious disqualification. It was no difficult task to set up a few handlooms in every village. The reason the women spun coarse and weak yarn was that the yarn had never been put to the test of weaving in their own villages. It was not enough that the vast majority of his audience had worn khaddar. He could not ignore the fact that most of the women had not worn due to want of a sufficient supply of khaddar. The remedy was in their own hands. He was sure they would not agree to having their flour kneaded from outside to save trouble in the kitchen. The arrangement would be absurd and equally so was the spinning without weaving. If they took it into their minds he knew they could accomplish it soon. Swaraj in their case was a matter of months, certainly not of years. He wished that now that they had accomplished such a great deal, they worked harder still for perfection. If they had hitherto welcomed the untouchables in their midst in public meetings and also allowed them the use of their wells, they might legitimately be expected now to go a step further and visit their homes for example, and persuade suspicious parents to send their children to national schools.

Boycott of Government educational and other institutions too might be secured in the future by the methods different from and better than those that had been adopted in certain cases in their taluk. After all, fasting too as had been reported to have been undertaken by some of the volunteers with a view to compel parents by appealing to their sense of pity to withdraw their children, was a form of moral violence. Such a course generally resulted in unwilling submission which was hardly to be desired by the non-co-operators who advocated the utmost freedom for all. But he was anxious that his reference to any defects in the splendid achievement of Bardoli should not be misunderstood as an expression of disappiontment. Whilst he was unable to give full marks to Bardoli tahsil declaring it fit for the immediate adoption of civil disobedience it gave him the greatest pleasure to be able to assure them for their consolation that he had not known any other taluk so well on the road to preparedness for civil disobedience, that is, swaraj. Their simplicity and earnestness were unmatched. Hindu-Muslim unity was nowhere so secure as there. He only hoped that Bardoli would continue its great career in the same enthusiastic fashion and accomplish in due course of time what little yet remained to be done by way of preparation. Then and only then could they summon him once again and say, "Fight us our battle", and give him the pleasure of leading the peaceful revolution, if such be still necessary.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1921

222. *MASTER KEY*

The three-fold suffering, water of love alone can cool.

—TULSIDAS

In big institutions, they have a special key which fits the locks on all doors. The key for each room opens that room and no other; but one officer has a key which fits all locks. In English, they call this latter, "the master key". I have used its equivalent in Gujarati, *vadi chavi*, as the title of this article.

Through the boycott programmes, people are expected to keep away from legislatures, students from schools and colleges and litigants from law-courts. If these three classes of people are not sufficiently influenced by our appeals, doubts about the success of these programmes arise.

But love is the master key in these cases—and the sovereign remedy.

Non-co-operation without love is Satanic; non-co-operation with love is godly. It was out of love that the Prophet carried on non-co-operation with the Arabs of Mecca for full 13 years. He opened their eyes with his love. It was certainly not hatred which impelled Mira to non-co-operate with Kumbha Rana. She lovingly submitted to the punishment which the Rana inflicted on her. Our non-co-operation also springs from love. Without it, everything is hollow. Love is not merely the master key, it is the only key. If those who have left Government schools hate the others who have not, then sacrifice is lifeless and dry. Our boycott of councils will have no meaning if we cherish ill-feeling for those who get elected to them. To try to win over with love those who differ from us is the way of dharma, to get angry with them is the Satanic way—the atheist's way.

Be it admitted to our shame and disgrace that our sacrifice has been vitiated, in some measure, by anger, ill will and similar feelings and this is why it has not shone to the best effect, nor yielded results. If all those who joined the boycott had borne no ill will to those who did not join, our position today would have been extremely good; we would have been about to win swaraj.

So our foremost duty is to shower love on people. Doing this does not mean becoming one of them. That would be unthinking love. It would mean our being a party to what they do. That is real love through which we love even our opponents, decline to

look upon them as fools and serve them. It is nothing to wonder at if one Hindu loves another Hindu; a Hindu's goodness lies in loving a Muslim equally well and respecting his manners and customs. Is there anything extraordinary in a person who co-operates with the Government being on good terms with another such person? Real strength and humility in a non-co-operator lie in loving an advocate of co-operation and being patient with him despite acute differences with him. We show no dignity in running down such a person, pouring contempt on him and hooting at him. Dignity lies in going barefoot to his house and being of service to him.

We have not properly attended to this part of our duty. Though I have been writing about it, I am sorry that I have not stressed the point as well as I should. The experience in Bombay has opened my eyes. It has brought home to me the shallowness of my tolerance. If every time I had strongly condemned verbal attacks on those co-operating with the Government, we would have advanced much further by now. If, every time a cap was snatched away, I had expressed my strongest disapproval of the action, things would have been much better today than they are. I know that, for a man who has the privilege of being the leader of such a great fight, it is a heinous sin not to exercise the utmost vigilance. If the general in this battle is much too weak or mild or feels himself helpless, he had better give up his leadership.

Now that we have realized our error, let us not be guilty of it again.

We should now banish from our minds all resentment against those who co-operate, against Parsis, Christians and Englishmen. Let us regard them too as our brothers and stop ostracizing them. We should not interrupt their water-supply or prevent barbers from serving them. We should see that their needs have been provided before we think of ours and should take pleasure in serving them. If, and only if, we understand this law which all religions teach, we shall get swaraj easily enough and soon. At every place, therefore, where preparations are afoot for starting civil disobedience, the first thing we should do is to meet every person who co-operates with the Government and demonstrate our friendly regard for him in spite of our differences with him.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

223. HINDU-MUSLIM-PARSI

I continue to be flooded with letters from Hindus and Parsis, both men and women. The correspondents blame each other's community. This is not the way to forge real unity. Hindus and Muslims should remember that Parsis are a small community and are mostly concentrated in one place. That is why their faults are immediately noticed and their virtues are easily forgotten. If we always see only faults in other members of our family, we shall end by imagining that we are the only perfect ones in the world. All others will seem to us so full of defects that we shall feel defiled even by their touch. But the truth is that a person who always points at others' evils is himself generally the greatest sinner of all.

He who picks holes in others only betrays his own weakness. Those Hindus and Muslims who always speak against Parsis are themselves weak, there is no doubt about it. If we see only our own faults, we shall ourselves rise and raise others too. Our great error has been that we forgot tolerance. Having accepted a new religion, we forgot its restraints and became fanatics. We discovered non-co-operation and came to understand its efficacy, and so we believed that all those who did not understand it lacked intelligence and wisdom, that they were traitors and sinners. By doing this, we only disgraced our non-co-operation. We forgot that only yesterday we ourselves graced meetings of people who favoured co-operation. We lost patience. We forced people to take off their foreign caps, but conveniently overlooked the foreign dhoti on our waist!

We started criticizing Parsis severely, taking it for granted that they would never come round. We forgot that they had contributed to the Angora Fund and to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. We lost sight of the fact that many of them wore khadi and that even Parsi women had started wearing it. We forgot all this and became enraged with our Parsi brothers and sisters. We did not remember the sacrifices made by some of them.

But some people ask me: "What about the fact that it was the Parsis who started all the trouble?" Would we not do better to think what we would have done, had we been only a lakh? If we but imagine ourselves reduced from the twenty-two crores or the seven crores that we are to the number of one lakh and think how we would behave then, we would understand what it is to be in such a plight. Every reader must have had the expe-

rience of living as a member of a minority at some place or other. Let him recall his feelings at that time. When Hindus and Muslims have still not shed fear of each other, why should they expect all at once that the Parsis should give up their fear? If Hindus and Muslims, having created bad blood between them and the Parsis, imagine that they will rule the country, they will be cherishing a wicked desire. It is their primary duty to befriend the minority communities and convince them that they are safe in independent India. If they only try to win over the minorities, they will discover invaluable jewels among them.

Let us never forget that God is the Help of the helpless. If we protect the weak, we shall qualify ourselves for His protection. When Maulana Abdul Bari Saheb wrote to the effect that success or failure in winning the friendship of the minorities will provide our test, he was stating the simple truth. So long as we do not allay their fears, we shall never ourselves be free from fear.

Hindus and Muslims should not desire, or act as if they desired, that members of the minority communities should come seeking their favour. It is our duty to take the initiative, and cultivate friendship with Parsis, Christians and members of other minority communities.

I do not suggest that, in doing this, we should flatter them. It is essential that we share their sufferings, take care not to quarrel with them, bear with them even if they co-operate with the Government, abstain from criticizing their dresses of foreign material, never get angry with them on this score and sincerely look upon them as our brothers. If two Parsis and a Christian happen to be our neighbours, we should not act as if they were utter strangers to us; our duty is to serve and cultivate their acquaintance.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

224. FORTHCOMING SESSION OF CONGRESS

When this issue is out, there will be 20 days to go before the Congress session. This session will be completely different from the previous ones. Though it may not celebrate the winning of swaraj, it will have to do something very like it, i.e., will have to prove its fitness for swaraj in everything it does. Efficiency in management, perfection of manners, and a spirit of fearlessness and independence which will leave nothing to be desired—we shall have to display all this.

Our management should be so perfect that we must not appear to have lost sight of the smallest detail. The arrangements for board, lodging, bathing and sanitation should be satisfying in every way. There should be a place for throwing refuse, and a place for storing water. Perfect cleanliness must meet the eye everywhere despite accumulation of waste water, refuse and night-soil. No puddles should be seen anywhere. Though latrines will be used by all, everything must present a clean appearance. Answering the call of nature is an elementary function of the body and, as all of us who will be assembling for the Congress will have their physical needs, cleanliness should receive our first attention. Khadinagar ought to provide an object-lesson in cleanliness.

People should be educated beforehand through leaflets and speeches so that they do not make noises, do not collect in crowds anywhere in Khadinagar, and obey the directions given by the volunteers. They should not enter grounds to which entry is forbidden and should not insist on going towards a place when stopped. They should see that, in any part which they enter, they do not inconvenience others. All these are proofs of our capacity to live as members of a community and should be in evidence on this occasion.

Volunteers must not speak with disrespect even to the poorest. They must not order anybody about as if they were policemen, but say politely what they wish to say. A volunteer's manners should be the exact opposite of a policeman's.

Shopkeepers should be honest in the price they charge for every article and should not think of robbing the guests. This will be evidence of our being a cultured people.

There will be a whole crowd of non-co-operators, both genuine and otherwise. Let them not imagine that they have been sent to rule over the earth. They should rather think that they are born only to serve others. Let us hope that everyone will attend the session in khadi. All members [of the Reception Committee] and delegates should be clad in khadi, but nobody should insult guests or tourists or visitors, whatever their dress. Those who are known to be in favour of co-operation should also be listened to with respect. Not even a child should be touched physically. No person should be held by his garment. Though the poet's line, "Look, none dares to catch the poor goat by the ear as she moves leisurely by" turned out wrong about the British rule, we should see that it does not about swaraj.

If we are thinking of thrusting the whole burden of management on the Chairman of the Reception Committee, we had better

write off the Congress session as a failure. The Chairman is only our agent. He can succeed and win credit only if thousands come forward to help him. Volunteers should be his hands and feet. Things can be managed only if they move round all parts of Ahmedabad and let people feel the charm of their presence. No new-comer should be at a loss to find a place for want of proper guidance, and delegates, whether known to us or not, should get all facilities.

These things are no more than a test of our fitness. I pray to God that the citizens of Ahmedabad and the people of Gujarat will emerge successful from it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1921

225. MY NOTES

My Ignorance

There is no limit to my ignorance of the geography of Gujarat. A resident of Anand and Shri Abbas Saheb, Kheda's captain, triumphantly point out an error[1] made by me and tell me that Dakor is not included in the Anand taluka so that I burden the latter with the responsibility of reforming it. Though I know that Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, somehow an impression remained with me, when writing the article, that it was in the Anand taluk. I apologize to the reader for my ignorance, but wish all the same to cling to the statement I made in error. Though, for administrative convenience, Dakor is included in the Thasra taluk, Anand cannot disown its responsibility. It is not possible that all the residents of the Anand taluk should become religious-minded, that is, brave, courteous and truthful, and yet should produce no effect on the neighbouring Dakor. I do not put the burden of reforming Dakor on the Anand taluk, but I shall treat the former as a barometer registering the improvement which takes place in the Anand taluk.

Change the Heart

The reforms I need, the reforms which can win success for Anand and Bardoli, will be useless if they are superficial. They should go deep. People's hearts should be changed. There should be no pretence of fearlessness; but fear should be truly destroyed.

[1] *Vide* "To Bardoli-Anand", 27-11-1921.

Peace should not be put on but should be intelligently practised. Khadi should not be merely worn but passionately loved. The spinning-wheel should not be formally worshipped but plied in every home as a religious duty. This alone will lead us to victory. If we remain slaves at heart, we would never attain freedom.

A Novel Struggle

This is a test of satyagraha, of our firmness in clinging to truth. To this day, there has been no nation in the world which claimed to adhere to truth and won its freedom. By adopting the means of their choice, nations did not win independence but acquired power over others. England is not free, but only powerful. It has enslaved us. To a slave, his master seems free and he strives to be like the latter and so finds pleasure in enslaving others. Such a slave never becomes really free, but is always subservient to anyone stronger than he is.

Truth Means Truth

But, at the moment, I do not wish to take the reader so deep into the matter. Let our freedom be of what kind it will, we have resolved to win it through satyagraha. We shall not, therefore, get it through hypocrisy. Those who have joined satyagraha without understanding its meaning or, if they understand it, have joined it with ulterior motives, will be able to satisfy neither themselves nor the people and, in the end, they will feel that they have gained nothing, and that will indeed be so. Shall we really be free from the sin of untouchability if we look down upon *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and mix with them merely for show? So long as we do not purify our minds and look upon them as our brothers and sisters and share their sufferings, we shall not win freedom, for until then we shall simply not be fit for it. It is on their account that our progress will be retarded. How far can a person walk by pretending that he has no fever and persuading himself that he is strong enough? If, merely through fear, we have been making a show of Hindu-Muslim friendship, we cannot possibly remain together till the last and our insincerity will be betrayed at the critical time. How can we win swaraj without being tested to the utmost? Even if British officials are deceived, Hindus and Muslims will, in such circumstances, start fighting amongst themselves. We shall never be able to make a beginning with swaraj. Right from the start the two communities will hate and fear each other. We shall, therefore, go forward only if our friendship is genuine.

Our Condition

Though I am impatient to get swaraj, I can be equally patient and wait for it. It is my advice to all to be like me. It will be easy to win swaraj if we really adopt the means we have decided to adopt. Without them, I think it impossible to get swaraj not only this year but in this generation.

We should bear in mind that we are altogether in a different position than others. Our numbers are our strength, and they are also our weakness. In no other country except India are there followers of two different religions who, right to this day, regard each other as enemies; in no other country do the majority of the people have a cowardly fear of using arms and in no other country are human beings the victims of so much hatred as *Dheds* and *Bhangis* are in India. Hence, the remedies for the ills of our country should also be new.

Lest We Forget

I hope Gujarat will not remain complacent. Our task will not be accomplished with wooden swords. The sword of satyagraha is stronger and sharper than a sword of steel. Fighting with it is no child's-play but a serious affair. There is no room in it at all for falsehood. If we learn to be truthful, we can win swaraj this year.

We will not, however, act in a different way after we have won swaraj, and our difficulties will not have decreased. At present most of us are engaged in fighting, that is, in receiving blows. But afterwards we shall have to build, find solutions to delicate problems and to run the government. Will we reintroduce untouchability at that time? Will we wear less khadi, or more rather? Will we set fire to the spinning-wheels, or have more of them working? Will the Hindus and the Muslims then forget each other and both forget the Christians and the Parsis and behave as utter strangers to one another? Shall we have then no schools to run? On the contrary, shall we not have to run even the schools which are at present known as Government schools? Shall we then be crowding the courts, or will the very system of pleading be altered and important changes introduced in the constitution of the courts? Let no one be too sure, either, that all at once we shall have a profusion of efficient people. If there is scarcity of such persons today, there will be more of it afterwards. We shall have to run the administration. For this, we have sown the seed at Nagpur. As we have sown, so shall we reap.

After a Year

If, therefore, any people believe that we shall have a holiday after December, they will be making the greatest error. Whether we get swaraj now or after some time, we shall not be acting in a different way after it is won. We shall have to continue to work for self-purification even then. What remains undone now will have to be finished later. If Anand, Bardoli and other talukas wish to fight, they should realize that, having taken the field once, they cannot retreat even if it takes a year or several years. If it is certain that victory will be theirs provided they take the lead, they should also resolve to put up with hardships for the time being. No one will comment if they do not take the first step. If they do, however, they will have no option but to stand firm and die or win. Such courage and fortitude are absolutely necessary.

No Need to Be Disheartened

I do not write this to dishearten Gujaratis, but to point out to them their duties and responsibilities. I write this so that Gujaratis do not enter the field under the misapprehension that there is nothing very difficult about the thing and then, by retreating, invite ridicule upon themselves. Those who have understood our struggle and have learnt to follow truth and non-violence will not at all be dismayed by what I have said here. I have given this warning in clear words so that if any Gujarati has yet not understood the meaning of our fight, he may now clearly understand it.

Sacred within Limits

I have often shown that the sanctity of khadi lies in the fact of its being swadeshi. Wheat is sacred grain, but it is eaten by a sannyasi and also by a thief. Likewise, the wicked and the virtuous both may wear the sacred khadi. Anyone who forsakes what is the dharma of an Indian in so far as his body is concerned commits an error and harms the country. It is true that, in this period of transition, other virtues are attributed to khadi and hypocrites prosper in their hypocrisy by dressing themselves in khadi. This cannot go on for long. When khadi comes to be regarded as our national dharma, it will be esteemed for its real value. Those who have understood the duty of wearing and producing khadi will never stop wearing it even though they may observe its misuse at some places.

There will be no difficulty now in seeing the answers to some questions raised by a friend, questions which appear like moral

dilemmas. It is our good fortune that in some places in the country people now consider it necessary to use khadi at marriages and deaths. At some marriages which took place in Ahmedabad recently, khadi was used—though not solely—to a large extent. It is reported that one bridegroom refused to marry the bride if she was not dressed in a khadi sari. The question raised is, whether, in order to encourage the use of khadi, we should attend weddings which are otherwise objectionable. Supposing our not attending hurts the couple and they go to the length of even giving up khadi! It is cowardice to ask such a question. We should not allow ourselves to be bribed by khadi. We should value each thing on its merits. If an old man of sixty dressed in ochre-coloured khadi, wearing a string of rosary beads and his body smeared with sacred ash, sets forth to marry a girl of twelve, we should certainly not attend the marriage merely to encourage the use of khadi or commend his simplicity. Similarly, we should not attend the marriage if a young man of twenty-five, on the death of his wife, gets himself engaged to another girl on the cremation ground itself and goes the very next day to marry her. There are different standards for khadi and for marriage. Just as we would hesitate to attend an otherwise unexceptionable marriage if khadi is not used on the occasion, so also we should not go to celebrate the marriage of an ill-matched pair though either may be loaded with khadi.

There is a letter from another friend on this same subject, and he writes with a sad heart :

> We do recognize the importance of khadi but, at a wedding where the bride, the bridegroom and their close relatives are dressed in khadi and all the women also are in khadi, what should we do when they start singing immodest marriage songs which shock the ears? Should we, for the sake of khadi, force ourselves to hear the songs, or disregarding khadi, save our ears from being polluted by them?

I have not reproduced the question with the intention of giving an answer. The correspondent has not stated it to get one. He has only drawn my attention to this custom in the hope that I shall criticize it. He wonders how we can hope for the rule of dharma to be established when even small girls receive such education in immodesty. The question makes me feel unhappy. When women sing such immodest songs, they must hardly be conscious of their being so. If such ugly customs live on, the responsibility lies with the men. It has simply not occurred to them to share their new knowledge or awakening with the women. Men can easily employ uncompromising satyagraha in such matters. This is the age

of the young. If they are virtuous and humble, they can end such evils in no time. Educated girls can also resort to satyagraha against such customs and end them. Every girl or woman who reads this can take up such matters and oppose the customs. They would soon disappear if intelligent women refuse to follow them.

ILL-MATCHED PAIRS

The problem of ill-matched pairs and men marrying for the second or third time is a difficult one. Perhaps, this disease is to be found in Kathiawar more than anywhere else. It is almost impossible to eradicate it so long as there are poor parents who are ready to sell their daughters and sensual rich men are ready to pay so that they may be able to gratify their lust. Only if, through the spiritual awakening which is taking place in consequence of the movement for swaraj, men learn to keep their passions under control will no old man of sixty who may have lost his wife set out the next day to marry again. This reform cannot be brought about by society taking upon itself to keep a watch on its members' misdeeds. Denunciation will not stop suffering of this kind. It can be stopped only through gentle persuasion and compassion. The father who sells his daughter and the man who purchases an innocent girl, both suffer from a disease and deserve pity. If all of us go on merely denouncing such persons, they will harden their hearts and lose all sense of shame. However, if we treat their disease and appeal to their sense of decency, they will certainly come to have good sense. Each caste can bring about immediate reform in this matter. For a person who has a sense of right and wrong, not to attend such a marriage is not, according to me, merely a means of ending this evil, it is his dharma. In following this dharma, however, one should be prompted by compassion, not by contempt and pride.

TO "DHARALAS", "GARASIAS" AND OTHERS

You claim to be Kshatriyas. In this holy *yajna*, we need the co-operation of all communities and castes. Swaraj will be difficult to win so long as we do not learn to look upon one another as our brothers and to protect one another.

The Kshatriyas' function is to protect. Instead of doing this, many of our *Dharala* brothers have taken to a wrong path. The Government often extends to them the law pertaining to criminal tribes.

I appeal to you to use your courage and capacity for suffering in the service of the country. The courage required in laying down

one's life is superior to that required for killing, and the whole world admires it. I hope that you will show the courage to die, without killing anyone, for the sake of the country.

I beg of you to forget past enmities and remove your neighbours' fears by adopting peaceful ways.

If you start carding, spinning and weaving in your homes, even during lean years you will never suffer from want of food or clothing. All these three processes are easy to learn and the work is an honourable occupation for respectable people. Any family can maintain itself with this work. I hope you will take it up.

Your well-wisher,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-12-1921

226. *LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*[1]

Tuesday, December 6, 1921

After hearing about what is going on there, I think you should now be brave. This means that, whenever necessary, you should speak out, calmly but firmly, and put up opposition. If there is no bitterness, and no anger under any circumstances, even when you oppose, you will be listened to by one and all. On the other side, you should keep your electors well-informed and see that your constituency becomes strong. If in this way the truth comes out, the trouble which broke out for a while will calm down. Those of you who insist that everything should be done in a clean way should meet together and decide what ought to be done. You should have no anger in your heart, but only love and compassion towards those who appear to be committing a mistake. That is bound to influence them. This is the path of *Rajayoga* which I have shown to you. You are fit for that path. I want you not to give way to despair.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

[1] This is in reply to several communications from the addressee to Gandhiji regarding activities in Bombay.

227. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS

[On or after *December 7, 1921*][1]

HEARTIEST CONGRATULATION. FIFTY WOMEN OF BENGAL LED BY YOUR WIFE AND SISTER. SWARAJ IS CERTAIN AND NEAR. I ENVY YOU. HOPE PERFECT PEACE.

Amrit Bazar Patrika, 13-12-1921

228. NOTES

No Despair

What will happen in the Punjab where Lalaji is to be imprisoned and in Assam where Messrs Phooken and Bardolai have been already convicted and similarly in Ajmer where Maulana Mohiuddin, Chairman of both the Khilafat and the Congress Committees, has been imprisoned?—such was the question asked by anxious inquirers. My answer was that the cause would progress for the incarceration of these chiefs. As a result of these imprisonments I should expect greater restraint, a greater sense of responsibility in these provinces. I should expect a greater output of khadi, a greater awakening among the students and the lawyers. Bravery of the leaders must prove infectious, if we are fit to govern ourselves. We must rise higher *with* repression not *after*. It will pay a government based on force to resort to repression each time people are cowed down by it even though they may revive in the end. Governments by force live for the day and thrive only upon repression. They die a natural death when their forcible measures do not answer the purpose for which they are intended. We never deserved our leaders, if after their withdrawal we could not make their spirit exhibit itself in and through us.

Sikh Immolation

The Sikh countrymen are solving their own and India's problem. All their best men are offering themselves as sacrifice for the sake of their faith. In soldierly fashion one after another they are seeking imprisonment without fuss and flutter and without the slightest violence. If the same calm courage continues, they will

[1] Mrs. Das and others were arrested on December 7. They were, however, released immediately.

without a shadow of doubt solve their own and with it also materially assist in solving India's problem. All India is watching with eager expectation this religious manifestation among the Sikhs.

REWARD OF ADOPTION

It is surprising that, so far as I know, no wire has been received by the Bombay Press regarding Mr. Stokes' arrest in Lahore. I see a paragraph in *The Tribune* referring to the event. I cannot imagine that no wire has been despatched about such a sensational arrest. My inference is that the wires notifying the arrest have been suppressed or delayed as were the wires about the arrest of the Ali Brothers. Mr. Stokes was arrested on the 3rd instant at Lahore cantonment in connection with articles contributed by him to *The Tribune* as calculated to "spread sedition and promote hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects." The District Magistrate offered to release Mr. Stokes on bail but he refused to be so released. This is a unique move on the part of the Government. Mr. Stokes is an American who has naturalized himself as a British subject and who has made India his home in a manner in which perhaps no other American or Englishman has. He rendered eminent services during the War and is known in the highest quarters as a well-wisher of the Government. No one can suspect him of ill will. But that he should feel with and like an Indian and share his sorrows and throw himself into the struggle has proved too much for the Government. To leave him free to criticize the Government was intolerable and so his white skin has proved no protection for him. The Government is determined to quash the movement at any cost. But it is beyond its ability to do so. Mr. Stokes' arrest perhaps demonstrates the weakness of the Government's case as not even Lalaji's does. Lalaji has no reward of war service to his credit. Lalaji is known to be "an agitator". He is not a white man. When therefore Mr. Stokes is put away the strongest suspicion arises in respect of the *bona fides* of the Government case even in the estimation of an outsider.

BARDOLI

I have paid in the company of Maulana Azad Sobhani the much expected visit to Bardoli taluka. It has a population of nearly one hundred thousand. It has about 140 villages. It had about sixty-five Government schools. Of these fifty-one have been nationalized. The Government schools are continued in some cases but have an attendance of less than 10 boys. The national schools have charge of over six thousand children including a few hundred girls. Hand-spinning is compulsory in all these schools, though it

is not yet being regularly taught or practised. Most of the schools have been nationalized only during the past three months. In all the villages I found the women taking keen interest in the national movement. We met thousands of people and visited six villages during the two days of our stay. The majority of men were dressed from top to toe in hand-spun khadi and a large number of women too were so dressed. Those who were not complained that they could not obtain khadi. This does not however mean that the people, either men or women, have given up the use of their old foreign stock. Many, I am sorry to say, still use it for domestic wear. Much is still left to be done in the shape of manufacture of khadi. There is a good number of wheels but very few looms in the taluka. The reader will be pained to hear that its staple crop is cotton which has hitherto been all exported. There is complete harmony between Hindus and Mussulmans. The relations with the co-operators have not been bitter. The untouchables freely attend meetings. I have however suggested that it can hardly be considered satisfactory so long as the managers of national schools do not go out of their way to bring untouchable children to their schools and villagers do not take a personal interest in the welfare of these suppressed countrymen. Many liquor shops are deserted. From all the accounts received by me there has been little or no intimidation resorted to in order to achieve this very wonderful result. In two or three cases volunteers visited villages, and on the parents hesitating to withdraw their children from Government schools, sat *dharna*[1] and fasted until the poor bewildered parents had complied with their request. I told the workers, that even this kind of pressure bordered on violence, for we had no right to make people conform to our opinion by fasting. One may conceivably fast for enforcing one's right but not for imposing one's opinion on another.

There was, too, a social boycott of a liquor dealer who had not kept his promise. I have advised even against such a boycott among a people so helpless as ours. Strong public opinion must for the time being be our only remedy for correcting internal abuses. Social boycott such as stopping barbers, washermen, etc., is undoubtedly a punishment which may be good in a free society but it becomes oppressive in a country which has for years been governed by force.

But I was remarkably struck by the almost completely peaceful manner in which the taluka of Bardoli has made a radical change for the better in many departments of life. It was an aggreeable

[1] Sitting at one spot for the purpose of exerting moral pressure

surprise, too, to find the movement being handled by elderly men who have never taken part in politics. The reader will be pleasingly astonished to find that all the wonderful work in Bardoli has been done by unpaid volunteers. Bardoli happens to be a taluka in which there are few paupers and most people have easy means of livelihood. This manifestation of public life is all the more remarkable on that account and is mainly if not entirely due to the utterly selfless services of a band of able and enthusiastic workers who only know to do or die. But in spite of all this great work I was reluctantly obliged to give my verdict in which Maulana Azad Sobhani fully concurred and which was accepted by the noble band of workers, that Bardoli, before it challenged the might of a great empire, must complete its swadeshi programme to the extent of manufacturing sufficient hand-spun to clothe itself, must freely admit untouchables into the national schools and must be so far non-violent that solitary unarmed co-operators and English and other officials might feel absolutely secure in their midst. And these conditions, God willing, the good people of Bardoli have undertaken to fulfil in a few months' time. An elderly co-operator put down six months at the outside. An enthusiastic young man who knew what he was talking about put down the period at one month. I close this happy recollection of our visit to Bardoli by informing the reader, that several co-operators whom I met testified to the peaceful and zealous manner in which the volunteers had worked in this taluka which, let us hope, will still have the privilege, if necessary, of giving battle to the Government.

President Elect

Lord Ronaldshay has addressed a homily to the President-elect and warned him in effect that if he does not behave himself at Ahmedabad, His Excellency will teach him a lesson. I know that it will not be the President's fault if he misses the lesson. He has sacrificed his all for his country. He is taking up the high office of President at the most critical period in the history of the country. He is tirelessly infusing new life into Bengal. He is preaching and practising the gospel of non-violence in season and out of season. He will need all the loyal co-operation that we can give him in his arduous task. It will be rendered light if all the delegates come prepared with full and fixed determination to prosecute the struggle to a victorious end in the face of every danger.

Delegates

I am hoping that in every case delegates will have been elected in accordance with the constitution. The delegates should thus

be the real representatives of the electors who have had their names registered in Congress books. Where a delegate has been imprisoned, a by-election should take place to fill the vacancy. There should be a full house to pass the necessary resolutions. My ideal of a delegate is that he bears a spotless private and public character, that he knows the condition of his district in terms of the Congress programme, that he knows hand-spinning so as to be able to teach it, that he habitually wears hand-spun khadi, that he believes in non-violence as his creed for the attainment of the national goal and for the perpetuation of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian-Jew unity, that he practises in his own person all that part of the programme of non-co-operation which is applicable to him, that he has prepared himself for imprisonment and placed at the disposal of the nation the bulk if not the whole of his time. In addition if he is a Hindu, he must have discarded untouchability and done some service during the year to the untouchables of his district. It is surely not much to expect six thousand staunch, true and fearless whole-time workers for the service of thirty crores of people. I would expect too the full proportion of Mussulman and Sikh delegates. I hope too that every province will send a fair number of women and untouchables as delegates.

Men and Measures

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has sent the following frank and full reply in answer to my inquiry regarding the charge[1] brought against him by a correspondent of transferring his condemnation of the existing system of Government to its English authors and administrators :

> I spoke on three occasions at the Provincial Conference at Agra. I cannot repeat the language I used but I am very clear as to what I meant. On the first occasion I protested against some veiled references to violence. Hasrat Mohani was our President and in his presidential address he expressed his dissatisfaction with the creed of non-violence. Several other speakers used violent language and apparently looked forward to a time when violence would have full play. All this took place on the Karachi Resolution. I laid stress on the non-violent character of the struggle and said that swadeshi was our only hope.
>
> On the second day, I proposed the swadeshi resolution. Notice of an amendment involving a boycott of British goods had been given. It was on this occasion that I probably used the phrases and words

[1] *Vide* "What Is Abuse?", 17-11-1921.

which have been misunderstood by Mr. Gandhi's questioner. My whole argument was that so far no way but that of swadeshi had been shown to us to achieve our freedom. I dealt with violence and disposed of it. I then dealt with various other objections. I stated that I desired most earnestly to rid India of English domination and the charkha and swadeshi were apparently the only means to bring this about.

I spoke a third time in answer to the amendment about boycott of British goods. I had opposed this amendment, and a very heated debate had taken place, about a score of speakers having spoken on either side. The amendment was put to the vote and lost.

It is evident that I have been misreported by some papers. I have not so far seen any report of my speeches and do not know which paper can have done so. My references to "English domination" or the "English Government" have been made to apply to the English people. I may have used the words अंग्रेजोंको हिंदोस्तानसे अलग करना[1] or some such language, and the reporter may have seized hold of this without reference to the context. As a matter of fact, the very circumstance that I proposed to expel "the English" by swadeshi ought to have convinced the listener that I referred to the system and not to individuals. It would be absurd to try to expel a single Englishman by the charkha.

I cannot of course say that my feeling towards Englishmen as such is entirely impersonal. I hate the system but sometimes, in spite of myself, I cannot help feeling ill will towards a certain individual for some time at least, and sometimes the ill will is transferred to the English people as a whole. But the feeling is always momentary. I am really surprised at the general absence of ill will against the English.

It is somewhat curious that the sentences to which exception has been taken occurred in a speech opposing a boycott of British goods. I opposed this on the ground, *inter-alia*, that it was opposed to the basic principle of non-co-operation, that it was based on hate and not love and so on. No one who heard me and who understood Urdu could have gone away with the impression that I was taking part in a crusade against individual Englishmen.

It is always difficult to differentiate between a man and his action. I can well believe that if an Englishman insulted me, I would flare up and hit him. But I think this would be weakness on my part. I have not enough control over myself. I am apt to lose temper at the slightest provocation. I am occasionally very angry with Englishmen. But I have never experienced the desire to "expel" Englishmen as such. In spite of everything I am a great admirer of the English, and in many

[1] "To expel the English from India"

things I feel even now that an Englishman can understand me better than the average Indian.

The letter illustrates the danger of relying on newspaper reports. The late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta so dreaded the reports that he never made an important pronouncement except in writing. The late Mr. Gokhale used often to insist upon revising reports of his own speeches. If these masters of oratory were in danger of being misreported, what is to be said of those who make their speeches in Hindustani and have the misfortune to be reported in English? In spite of all the goodwill in the world, reporters have rarely succeeded in reporting my speeches correctly. Indeed the best thing would be not to report speeches at all, except when they have undergone revision by the speakers themselves. If this simple rule were followed much misunderstanding could be avoided.

Young India, 8-12-1921

229. IN EARNEST

The arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai and Messrs Lalkhan, Santanam and Gopichand in the Punjab, of Messrs Phooken and Bardolai in Assam, Babu Jitendralal Bannerjee in Bengal, Maulana Mohiuddin and others in Ajmer and Mr. Harkarannath Mishra and others in Lucknow means business. It shows not merely that the Government is in earnest but that it is not going to tolerate non-co-operation any longer; no longer is it a question of putting down violence, it is one of compelling co-operation. And this is as it should be. The Government had to appear in its true colours some day or other. No Prince had such welcome as is being offered to the Prince of Wales. The chosen leaders of the people are being put away so that the latter may accept the lead of the Government and so that there may be no hartal on the day of the Prince's entry into the various provinces.

All this the Government of India, constituted as it is, has a right to do, and we non-co-operate because it claims and exercises such right on due occasion. The right consists in its imposing its will upon the people, not recognizing that of the people to have their own way except on pain of being imprisoned. The issue is clear, and neatly summed up in the Lawrence statue whose removal the Government will not allow although it is the property in law of the people. It must govern by the pen or the sword. Once more the choice has been offered to the people. Will they accept

the honourable imposition of the sword and reject the degrading dictation of the pen?

The people cannot complain if after fifteen months' training they do not know what to do. Indeed the best thing they can do is to do nothing, i.e., to remain as they were and continue as if nothing extraordinary had happend. England did not stop the War because Lord Kitchner died. "Business as usual" was her motto. She was well organized for violence—well enough to do without a general or to find an endless succession of generals. Are we so well organized for non-violence as to do without leaders, i.e., have an endless succession of them?

In the person of Lala Lajpat Rai the Government have arrested one of the greatest of us. His name is known all over India. His self-sacrifice has enshrined him in the hearts of his countrymen. He has laboured as very few have for non-violence side by side with the freest expression and organization of public opinion. His arrest typifies as nothing else can the attitude of the Government.

The Punjab has lost no time in choosing a successor. The Punjabis could not have made a better choice than by electing Agha Sufdar. He is one of the truest of Mussulmans and one of the bravest of Indians. His services are all rendered in a most unassuming manner. I have no doubt that he will command the same loyal co-operation that Lalaji has. The best honour that the Punjabis can do to Lalaji is to continue his work as if he was in their midst. It is blind, foolish and selfish love which dissolves with the disappearance permanent or temporary of the earthy tabernacle which holds the deathless spirit. The Punjabis may not always get an Agha Sufdar to guide them in the place of Lalaji. He may be removed from their midst sooner than we may expect. In well-ordered organizations leaders are elected for convenience of work, not for extraordinary merit. A leader is only first among equals. Some one must be put first, but he is and should be no stronger than the weakest link in the chain. Having therefore made our selection we must follow him, or the chain is broken and all is lost.

I wish I could impart my faith to the people that nothing much remains to be done in order to take us to the heaven. The way is clear before us. The President-elect has stated it in unequivocal terms:

> My first word and my last word to you is never to forsake the ideal of non-violent non-co-operation. I know it is a difficult creed to follow. I know that sometimes the provocation is so great that it is extremely

difficult to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. The success of the movement however depends upon this great principle.

In order to enable us to enforce this great principle in our own lives, we must avoid all occasions for provocation. We therefore need no demonstrations now nor big meetings, we must discipline those who have become awakened to withstand provocation and to do constructive national work which is organization of carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving so as to enable the nation to supplement her slender resources and to find work for the idle hours of the millions. Hindu-Muslim unity is an article of faith with us. It is not to be cultivated or demonstrated except by all working together for national uplift and therefore devoting their time exclusively to manufacture of khadi.

As soon as we have attained a complete boycott of foreign cloth and begun to manufacture our own khadi in our respective provinces and villages, we can become free probably without having to resort to mass civil disobedience. Therefore aggressive civil disobedience should be avoided, at least till after finishing the boycott of foreign cloth and qualifying for the manufacture of hand-spun khadi. Defencive civil disobedience which is forced on us in the prosecution of our campaign we ought to welcome whenever it comes.

It will be a distinct sign of weakness and unfitness for swaraj, if these imprisonments dishearten or demoralize us. He is no soldier who is afraid or unwilling to pay the toll demanded of him. The more he is called upon to pay, the more glad he is to find himself the first to have to pay. Let us believe and know that we must provide the Government jails with all the work they can take. I am convinced that it is not argument but suffering of the innocent that appeals both to the persecutor and the persecuted. The nation will shed her slothful indifference and the Governors their callousness by the sight of such suffering. But it must be the willing suffering of the strong and not the unwilling suffering of the helpless weak. Those who have gone or are about to go to jail can say, "It is finished." We who remain outside have to prove worthy of their finished work by continuing their work till we have set them free or have joined them. He serves best who suffers most.

Young India, 8-12-1921

230. *WHAT TO DO?*

Mr. Jayaker's address has been followed by a conference of all Maharashtra at Akola. Mr. Jayakar is a thinker, he loves his country. He commands and deserves respectful attention. Those who gathered together at Akola are earnest, patriotic, seasoned soldiers. They are amongst the boldest and the most disciplined workers in the land. And one has to pause and think when they dissent from a programme.

Mr. Jayakar's address and the proceedings of the Akola conference have made me think furiously. There is no difficulty about understanding and appreciating the suggested modifications. It is a programme, if I may venture to say so, of unbelief. It is based upon the assumption that swaraj is not attainable within a short time and that we must make such use as we can of the existing machinery with a view to improving it. The programme now being worked is based upon the belief that the existing machinery is worthless and its use only retards our progress and distracts attention.

The corner-stone of the national movement is non-co-operation with violence whether of the pen or the sword. Education and legislation are the instruments today in the hands of the violent. To make use of their law-courts or their legislatures or their schools is to take part in their violence. There is a fundamental distinction between the two processes. The one is aseptic and the other antiseptic. They are diametrically opposite. In the one you rely upon the inherent purity of the system to destroy all poisonous germs that have entered the body, and in the other you resort to outside applications, stronger poisons to destroy the intruding germs. Both may be effective but they cannot be used at the same time. We definitely rejected the antiseptic treatment last year. The majority at Maharashtra frankly suggest a return.

We are no longer in the dark. We have the results of fifteen months' working of the new methods. Rejection of courts, schools and councils is an integral part of the programme. We may not give up parts because we have not achieved full success, if we are convinced that in themselves they are desirable. Although we have not succeeded in emptying the three institutions we have demolished their prestige. They neither worry nor dazzle us. That many parents, many lawyers and many law-givers have not responded, shows that we must make a greater attempt to wean

them, not now by arguing but by the exemplary conduct of abstainers. For me they are the Government. Just as I may not apply for a paid post because no Government servant resigns, I may not join the ranks of voluntary servants because the latter do not come away. I am convinced that the country has risen because of the abstention even of the few from association with these emblems of the existing Government.

Inadequate response is an eloquent plea if you will for establishing better schools and panchayats, not for confession of incapacity by returning to the fleshpots of Egypt.

But we have passed the stage of argument. When the sun is shining, you do not need to demonstrate its heat giving power by argument. And if anybody shivers in spite of being in the sun, no amount of argument can convince him of the sun's warmth, nor may you quarrel with the shivering one. He must seek other means, if there be any, of warming himself. My plea is for everyone to act according to his belief. The Congress provides the widest platform. Its creed is incredibly simple. A full-fledged co-operator as well as a nationalist who wants a change in the programme can work in it. Let us not push the mandate theory to ridiculous extremes and become slaves to resolutions of majorities. That would be a revival of brute force in a more virulent form. If rights of minorities are to be respected, the majority must tolerate and respect their opinion and action. There is no reason whatsoever why nationalists may not practise as lawyers or send their children to Government schools or seek election to the councils and still belong to the Congress. Only they may not act in the name of the Congress so long as they have not brought round to their view the majority of Congressmen. It will be the duty of the majority to see to it that minorities receive a proper hearing and are not otherwise exposed to insults. Swaraj will be an absurdity if individuals have to surrender their judgment to the majority.

I wish to make a personal appeal to all Congressmen. I would ask them to believe me when I say that as leader and originator of the movement inaugurated at Calcutta, I would feel hampered if I have not the hearty co-operation of those who vote for the programme. I would gladly find myself in a minority and confidently expect to march to victory. This Government cannot stand for one day the determined religious opposition of one district, if only the others will not interfere in the manner Bombay did.

There is room enough in our great country for as many parties as there are honest men. I would welcome an efficient and able organization containing men, who believe in using Government

institutions, and finding what warmth they can give them, even as I would have all organizations to extend toleration to those whole-hoggers who wish to cut off all possible connection with the Government. There is no reason why a province which can carry the people with it should not organize itself even on either basis.

I plead, that is to say, for a truthful programme and truthful parties. Let people only work programmes in which they believe implicitly. Loyalty to human institutions has its well-defined limits. To be loyal to an organization must not mean subordination of one's settled convictions. Parties may fall and parties may rise, but if we are to attain freedom, our deep convictions must remain unaffected by such passing changes.

We are on the eve of a new life. We may not see the image of swaraj risen before us at the end of the month but we must feel the warm glow of the coming event in no unmistakable fashion. And we shall feel it only if everyone of us will try to be true to himself. To believe in the infallibility of our means is to attain swaraj. The vote of the Congress this year must not be a leap in the dark. It must not be any more in the nature of an experiment. It should be an emphatic endorsement or rejection of the existing programme.

Young India, 8-12-1921

231. MOPLAH TRAGEDY

Here is an extract from a pathetic letter received by me regarding the Moplah tragedy :

> You could not have missed the Moplah death wagon even amidst the Bombay city tragedy. However I send you two cuttings which tell the tale. It is not a tragedy. It is but a symptom of the mentality that is in charge of affairs in Malabar. The spirit at the top sets the standards of humanity and duty for those below. The second Press *communique* shows us the mentality of the Government of Madras. It admits that Moplah prisoners regularly "travelled" in luggage sealed wagons—"with no evil effects whatsoever"! Only the daily increasing callousness to suffering and brutalization of all concerned made them put in more and more into the given space till the point was reached when 127 full-sized men were pushed into an iron van 18 ft. by nine ft. and seven and a half feet high and sealed up without door or windows open, covered goods fashion. The dimensions yield an area of 162 sq. feet for 127 men. They could not possibly sit down. All standing, they could just fill the space

tight. Naturally this crucifixion lasted not much over six hours. Will this climax of inhumanity bring it all to an end? If military operations are suspended and the causes for desperation among the whole Moplah community removed, and you and friends are permitted to go into the disturbed area, we can guarantee peace within a week.

The same time I received the foregoing letter I received the following unexpected cutting from *The Servant of India*:

Fortified by an inexhaustible faith in the power of non-co-operators to restore order in Malabar without the use of force, Mr. Gandhi thinks that the present hostilities—for the continuance of which strangely enough he holds Government solely responsible—mean a wanton destruction of the Moplahs. It is unthinkable that the hostilities will terminate only after the whole Moplah race is exterminated, but to those who have the misfortune not to share the simple faith of Mr. Gandhi in the magical powers with which the non-co-operators are gifted, the problem presents complications to which happily Mr. Gandhi's mind is a stranger. However the casuistry of his appeal to the Liberals is hard to beat. He is precluded by his principle of non-co-operation from directly approaching Government in regard to anything; and therefore he wishes to approach them *via* Liberals in the matter of Malabar. For his appeal to the Liberals is for the purpose of getting Government to agree, among other things, to let non-co-operators go to the disturbed area. Is this not co-operation, we ask. In the second place, there is no general prohibition; the non-co-operators as a body are at liberty to travel about in Malabar just as well as anybody else, and they have not yet brought peace to that harried district. But if Mr. Gandhi alone is able to restore order, we would humbly suggest that when the time comes for commencing civil disobedience, he had better select this prohibition order for non-compliance. In that case he would be able at once to break the Government and to prevent the cruelties which are now in progress. In the meantime, he might try and convert at least the non-co-operators in Malabar that the best way to stop the trouble is for Government to withdraw their troops. The complaint that we have heard is that instead of Government employing excessive force, they are not employing enough, and are thus deliberately protracting the agony just to teach non-co-operators a lesson.

I was totally unprepared for such a terrible misunderstanding of my position by *The Servants of India*. I have employed no casuistry in addressing my appeal to the Liberals. The question of co-operation does not arise at all. Nor am I ashamed to approach the Government directly a thousand times for permission for a party of peace to proceed to Malabar. In my appeal I have sought the intervention of the Liberals for the sake of compelling the

Government to grant the permission. I had assumed knowledge on the part of the Liberals that I was threatened to be turned back when it was known I was about to proceed to Calicut, that Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, when as secretary he tried to proceed to Malabar for relief work, was refused permission, that Mr. Yakub Hasan asked for permission, as soon as the outbreak took place, to go to Malabar to be able to pacify the Moplahs. I am quite willing to admit the helplessness of non-co-operators in many matters. The very creed of non-violence brings it about. Non-co-operators do not hesitate to seek permission where it has to be obtained for doing things that promote peace. Their creed prevents them from giving *voluntary* co-operation wherever abstention is possible. Neither do they seek Government assistance where it is possible to avoid it.

The writer of the paragraph cruelly suggests civil disobedience. It is not a weapon to be used for the sake of bravado. If civil disobedience could have ended the trouble, it would have been undertaken long ago. Mass civil disobedience will be undertaken even on this simple issue, when there is a certainty almost of non-violence being observed.

Why is it "strange" that I consider the Government solely reponsible for the trouble? They could have avoided the trouble by settling the Khilafat question, they could have avoided it by allowing non-co-operators to take the message of non-violence to the Moplahs. The outbreak would not have taken place if the Collector had consulted the religious sentiment of the Moplahs.

I do indeed accuse the Government of punishing the Moplahs after they have done the mischief instead of protecting the Hindus from Moplah outrage. Would the Government have acted in the same leisurely fashion if English families had been in danger instead of Hindus, and would it have inhumanly treated so-called rebels had they been Europeans instead of being Moplahs? I am sorry to be forced to the conclusion that the Government are betraying criminal negligence alike in their duty of protecting Hindus and of treating Moplah rebels as human beings.

Young India, 8-12-1921

A friend has placed in my hands a bulletin on Indian Piece-Goods Trade prepared by Mr. A. C. Coubrough C.B.E. by order of the Government of India. It contains the following prefatory note :

> The Government of India desire it to be understood that the statements made and the views expressed in this bulletin are those of the author himself.

If so, why has the Government of India burdened the taxpayer with the expense of such bulletins? The one before me is 16th in the series. Do they publish both the sides of the question?

The bulletin under review is intended to be an answer to the swadeshi movement. It is an elaborate note containing a number of charts showing the condition of imports and home manufacture of piece-goods including hand-woven. But it does not assist the reader in studying the movement. The painstaking author has bestowed no pains upon a study of the present movement or its scope. That the Government of India treats the greatest constructive and co-operative movement in the country with supreme contempt and devotes people's money to a vain refutation instead of a sympathetic study and treatment is perhaps the best condemnation that can be pronounced upon the system under which it is carried.

The author's argument is :

1. The movement if successful will act not as a protective but a prohibitive tariff.

2. This must result in merely enriching the Indian capitalist and punishing the consumer.

3. The imports are non-competitive in that the bulk of the kind of piece-goods imported are not manufactured in India.

4. The result of boycotting such piece-goods must be high prices without corresponding benefit.

5. The boycott therefore being against the law of supply and demand and against the consumer must fail in the end.

6. The destruction of hand-spinning which I have deplored is due to natural causes, viz., the invention of time-saving appliances and was therefore inevitable.

7. The Indian farmer is responsible for his own ruin in that he has indolently neglected cotton culture which was once so good.

8. The best service I can render is therefore to induce the agriculturist to improve the quality of cotton.

9. The author concludes :

> If instead of filling homes with useless charkhas he were to start a propaganda for the more intensive cultivation of cotton and particularly for the production of longer-staple cotton, his influence would be felt not only at the present day but for many generations to come.

The reader will thus see, that what I regard as the supreme necessity for the economical salvation of India, the author considers to be rank folly. There is therefore no meeting ground here. And in spite of the prefatory note of the Government of India reproduced by me, the author does represent the Government attitude. I have invited them and the co-operators definitely to make common cause with the people in this movement at any rate. They may not mind its political implications because they do not believe in them. And surely they need not feel sorry if contrary to their expectation, the rise of the charkha results in an increase in the political power of the people. Instead of waging war against khadi, they might have popularized its use and disarmed the terrible suspicion they labour under of wishing to benefit the foreign manufacturer at the expense of the Indian cultivator. My invitation is open for all time. I prophesy that whatever happens to the other parts of the national programme, swadeshi in its present shape will bide for ever and must if India's pauperism is to be banished.

Even though I am a layman, I make bold to say that the so-called laws laid down in books on economics are not immutable like the laws of Medes and Persians, nor are they universal. The economics of England are different from those of Germany. Germany enriched herself by bounty-fed beet sugar. England enriched herself by exploiting foreign markets. What was possible for a compact area is not possible for an area 1900 miles long and 1500 broad. The economics of a nation are determined by its climatic, geological and temperamental conditions. The Indian conditions are different from the English in all these essentials. What is meat for England is in many cases poison for India. Beef tea in the English climate may be good, it is poison for the hot climate of religious India. Fiery whisky in the north of the British Isles may be a necessity, it renders an Indian unfit for work or society. Furcoats in Scotland are indispensable, they will be an intolerable burden in India. Free trade for a country which has become industrial, whose population can and does live in cities, whose people

do not mind preying upon other nations and therefore sustain the biggest navy to protect their unnatural commerce, may be economically sound (though as the reader perceives, I question its morality). Free trade for India has proved her curse and held her in bondage.

And now for Mr. Coubrough's propositions :

1. The movement is intended to serve the purpose of a voluntary prohibitive tariff.

2. But it is so conceived as neither unduly to benefit the capitalist nor to injure the consumer. During the very brief transition stage the prices of home manufactures may be, as they are, inflated. But the rise can only be temporary as the vast majority of consumers must become their own manufacturers. This cottage manufacture of yarn and cloth cannot be expensive even as domestic cookery is not expensive and cannot be replaced by hotel cookery. Over twenty-five crores of the population will be doing their own hand-spinning and having yarn thus manufactured woven in neighbouring localities. This population is rooted to the soil and has at least four months in the year to remain idle.

If they spin during those hours and have the yarn woven and wear it, no mill-made cloth can compete with their khadi. The cloth thus manufactured will be the cheapest possible for them. If the rest of the population did not take part in the process, it could easily be supplied out of the surplus manufactured by the twenty-five crores.

3. It is true that non-competitive imports are larger than those that compete with the manufactures of Indian mills. In the scheme proposed by me the question does not arise, because the central idea is not so much to carry on a commercial war against foreign countries as to utilize the idle hours of the nation and thus by natural processes to help it to get rid of her growing pauperism.

4. I have already shown that the result of boycott cannot in the end be a rise in the price of cloth.

5. The proposed boycott is not against the law of supply and demand, because it does away with the law by manufacturing enough for the supply. The movement does require a change of taste on the part of those who have adopted finer variety and who patronize fantastic combinations of colours and designs.

6. I have shown in these pages, that the destruction of hand-spinning was designed and carried out in a most inhuman manner by the agents of the East India Company. No amount of appliances would ever have displaced this national art and industry but

for this artificial and systematically cruel manner of carrying out the destruction.

7. I am unable to hold the Indian farmer responsible for the deterioration in cotton culture. The whole incentive was taken away when hand-spinning was destroyed. The state never cared for the cultivator.

8. My activity, I am proud to think, has already turned the cultivator's attention to the improvement of cotton. The artistic sense of the nation will insist on fine counts for which long staple is a necessity. Cotton culture by itself cannot solve the problem of India's poverty. For it will still leave the question of enforced idleness untouched.

9. I therefore claim for the charkha the honour of being able to solve the problem of economic distress in a most natural, simple, unexpensive and businesslike manner. The charkha therefore is not only not useless as the writer ignorantly suggests, but it is a useful and indispensable article for every home. It is the symbol of the nation's prosperity and therefore freedom. It is a symbol not of commercial war but of commercial peace. It bears not a message of ill will towards the nations of the earth but of good-will and self-help. It will not need the protection of a navy threatening a world's peace and exploiting its resources, but it needs the religious determination of millions to spin their yarn in their own homes as today they cook their food in their own homes. I may deserve the curses of posterity for many mistakes of omission and commission but I am confident of earning its blessings for suggesting a revival of the charkha. I stake my all on it. For every revolution of the wheel spins peace, goodwill and love. And with all that, inasmuch as the loss of it brought India's slavery, its voluntary revival with all its implications must mean India's freedom.

Young India, 8-12-1921

233. *TO CORRESPONDENTS*

R. V. BAHULEKAR: 1. Please read answer to correspondents in the last issue. Pity and hatred may be the same to a man who has become perfect. Only he will then have little cause for killing. For me an imperfect being love and hate are two distinct and opposite sensations, and reading the *Bhagavad Gita* in its applicability to imperfect men, I find it hard to believe that we can kill without being angered. In my humble opinion it is a prostitution of the

Vedanta to apply to imperfect beings conduct possible only for perfect beings.

2. I advised the cultured untouchables of Travancore that they might singly demand entrance to temples if they could exercise restraint and stand insults from the keepers without seeking the assistance of courts of law. My advice to untouchables generally is not to test the right of entry into temples whilst the evil of untouchability is otherwise still in existence. In no case have I advised entry into sanctuaries. In theory I do claim that custodians of Hindu temples should throw open to untouchables those parts which are open to other classes.

S. GOVINDSWAMI IYER: If you believe in non-co-operation, you cannot join the students' military corps.

Young India, 8-12-1921

234. *SWADESHI IN THE UNITED PROVINCES*

The progress of swadeshi in the U.P., a report[1] of which has been prepared by the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, is full of lessons for the other provinces of India, both as regards the success achieved in the several lines of organizing work as well as the difficulties that had to be encountered. The work was considered under the following heads: (1) Distribution of charkhas; (2) organizing a khadi depot; (3) supplying hand-spun yarn to weavers and inducing them to weave only such yarn; and (4) organizing the boycott.

The U.P. Provincial Congress Committee deserves congratulations upon its progress in swadeshi. I hope however that it will not be satisfied till its khadi is all made of hand-spun yarn. Development of hand-spinning is the key to the solution of India's poverty. Experts are required to improve and regularize the quality of hand-spun yarn.

Young India, 8-12-1921

[1] Only the opening paragraph of the condensed report published in *Young India*, 1-12-1921, is reproduced here.

235. LOVE NOT HATE

SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921

A telegram from Allahabad says Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Shamlal Nehru and Mr. George Joseph, Editor of the *Independent* have been arrested. It was received at 11 o'clock last night. It positively filled me with joy. I thanked God for it.

I had not expected Panditji's arrest. In our discussions I used to tell Panditji that he would be about the last to be arrested. Sir Harcourt Butler would not have the courage to lay hands upon him. His friend Rajasaheb of Mahmudabad would decline to remain in office if he was to be arrested. I marvel at Sir Harcourt Butler's philosophic courage. Panditji has been working against tremendous odds. He has been battling against his old enemy asthma. I know that he has never worked for his rich clients, nor even for the afflicted Punjab as he has slaved for pauper India. I have pleaded with him to take rest. He has refused to do so. I rejoice to think that he will now have respite from the toil that was wearing him out.

But my joy was greater for the thought, that what I had feared would not happen before the end of the year because of the sin of Bombay was now happening by reason of the innocent suffering of the greatest and the best in the land. These arrests of the totally innocent is real swaraj. Now there is no shame in the Ali Brothers and their companions remaining in jail. India has not been found undeserving of their immolation.

But my joy, which I hope thousands share with me, is conditional upon perfect peace being observed whilst our leaders are one after another taken away from us. *Victory is complete if non-violence reigns supreme in spite of the arrests. Disastrous defeat is a certainty if we cannot control all the elements so as to ensure peace.* We are out to be killed without killing. We have stipulated to go to prison without feeling angry or injured. We must not quarrel with the condition of our own creating.

On the contrary our non-violence teaches us to love our enemies. By non-violent non-co-operation we seek to conquer the wrath of the English administrators and their supporters. We must love them and pray to God that they might have wisdom to

see what appears to us to be their errors. It must be the prayer of the strong and not of the weak. In our strength must we humble ourselves before our Maker.

In the moment of our trial and our triumph let me declare my faith, I believe in loving my enemies. I believe in non-violence as the only remedy open to the Hindus, Mussulmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews of India. I believe in the power of suffering to melt the stoniest heart. The brunt of the battle must fall on the first three. The last named three are afraid of the combination of the first three. We must by our honest conduct demonstrate to them that they are our kinsmen. We must by our conduct demonstrate to every Englishman that he is as safe in the remotest corner of India as he professes to feel behind the machine gun.

Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Judaism—in fact religion is on its trial. Either we believe in God and His righteousness or we do not. My association with the noblest of Mussulmans has taught me to see that Islam has spread not by the power of the sword but by the prayerful love of an unbroken line of its saints and fakirs. Warrant there is in Islam for drawing the sword; but the conditions laid down are so strict that they are not capable of being fulfilled by everybody. Where is the unerring general to order jehad? Where is the suffering, the love and the purification that must precede the very idea of drawing the sword? Hindus are at least as much bound by similar restrictions as the Mussulmans of India. The Sikhs have their recent proud history to warn them against the use of force. We are too imperfect, too impure and too selfish as yet to resort to an armed conflict in the cause of God as Shaukat Ali would say. Will a purified India ever need to draw the sword? And it was the definite process of purification we commenced last year at Calcutta.

What must we then do? Surely remain non-violent and yet strong enough to offer as many willing victims as the Government may require for imprisonment. Our work must continue with clock-work regularity. Each province must elect its own succession of leaders. Lalaji has set a brilliant example by making all the necessary arrangements. The chairman and the secretary must be given in each province emergency powers. The executive committees must be the smallest possible. Every Congressman must be a volunteer.

Whilst we must not avoid arrest we must not provoke it by giving unnecessary offence.

We must vigorously prosecute the swadeshi campaign till we

are fully organized for the manufacture of all the hand-spun khadi we require and have brought about a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

We must hold the Congress at any cost in spite of the arrest of everyone of the leaders unless the Government dissolve it by force. And if we are neither cowed down nor provoked to violence but are able to continue national work, we have certainly attained swaraj. For no power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and godly people.

M. K. Gandhi

Young India, 8-12-1921

236. COMPLAINT OF THE UNTOUCHABLES

Two *Antyaja* friends write as follows:[1]

There is, in this complaint, a measure of ignorance and of anger arising from ignorance, but, that apart, the letter deserves consideration. By passing resolutions and talking about their problem we have raised hopes in them. It was absolutely necessary to do this. It was necessary also that hopes should be raised in them and to tell those *Antyaja* friends that what has happened should be sufficient answer to them. Another answer can be that they lay the entire burden on me. I can understand the sting in their words. They accuse me of being satisfied with the more or less that I do myself and of being gullible enough to be taken in by others who only befool me. However, if I do something, there are others who may be doing less but still they do it.

Untouchability is an attitude of the mind, not a concrete object. To eradicate it, therefore, is not as easy as to persuade pupils to leave schools. No agitation, therefore, like the one with regard to schools can be suggested in respect of untouchability. A change of heart is necessary for this reform, as it is for accepting the principle of non-violence. The movement, therefore, can only be carried on along the same line as that for non-violence. Just as the extent to which the latter has been accepted by the people can be measured from the occasional incidents of violence which occur, so can progress in the removal of untouchability be measured from occasional evidence of its survival. No rule of arithmetic can be applied to judge this. You cannot work out as an arithmetical

[1] Not reproduced here

exercise, "If so many Hindus have mixed with so many untouchables within such a period of time, what time will it take for all the crores of Hindus to mix with all the millions of untouchables?"—and ascertain the progress from the answer. But we get a measure of the progress from incidents which occur from time to time. The issue was first discussed as a principle in the Gujarat Vidyapith. As a result, the principle of admitting *Antyaja* pupils in its schools was accepted even at the risk of putting its very existence in danger, and some members who had tendered their resignations on this issue were allowed to leave the Vidyapith. If, again, the existence of an institution like the Dakshinamurti Bhavan is in serious danger today, the reason is the same. The teachers who are the very soul of the Bhavan are fighting a life-and-death struggle there to get the principle accepted. I cannot claim credit for either of these two results. I would have been defeated if the majority of the members of the Vidyapith had opposed me. But, on the contrary, they themselves believed in the principle independently of my view. In the holy fight which is being waged in the Dakshinamurti Bhavan, I cannot claim to have a hand even as an individual member. It was because of this issue that several proffered donations to the Tilak Swaraj Fund were withheld, but the managers of the Fund did not care for the loss. *Antyajas* have freely attended hundreds of public meetings in Gujarat and elsewhere. The All-India Congress Committee has sanctioned an expenditure of more than Rs. 50,000 for *Antyaja*-welfare activities at various places. This amount excludes the money already spent by the Provincial Committees. Non-co-operators have thus been working all over India and independently of party considerations. In every province, enthusiastic young men of character have been, with the utmost sincerity of purpose, sacrificing their all in the service of *Antyajas*. This is the first time that, in every constituency, *Antyaja* brothers have been elected delegates though they had expressed no such desire.

This for the satisfaction of the authors of the letter and other *Antyaja* friends like them who feel disappointed. But, while we may draw their attention to such a movement having spread, we must admit at the same time that there is some truth in their complaint. Many persons simply make a show of mixing [with *Antyajas*] in order to hoodwink others, and are not sincere about the matter. Mixing with them in this spirit will yield bitter fruit. The practice of untouchability is an offence against dharma and its disappearance will bear fruit only if the prejudice is [illegible]ed fr[illegible] the heart. The campaign against it is not a political

are fully organized for the manufacture of all the hand-spun khadi we require and have brought about a complete boycott of foreign cloth.

We must hold the Congress at any cost in spite of the arrest of everyone of the leaders unless the Government dissolve it by force. And if we are neither cowed down nor provoked to violence but are able to continue national work, we have certainly attained swaraj. For no power on earth can stop the onward march of a peaceful, determined and godly people.

M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 8-12-1921

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Untouchability is an attitude of the mind, not a concrete object. To eradicate it, therefore, is not as easy as to persuade pupils to leave schools. No agitation, therefore, like the one with regard to schools can be suggested in respect of untouchability. A change of heart is necessary for this reform, as it is for accepting the principle of non-violence. The movement, therefore, can only be carried on along the same line as that for non-violence. Just as the extent to which the latter has been accepted by the people can be measured from the occasional incidents of violence which occur, so can progress in the removal of untouchability be measured from occasional evidence of its survival. No rule of arithmetic can be applied to judge this. You cannot work out as an arithmetical

[1] Not reproduced here

exercise, "If so many Hindus have mixed with so many untouchables within such a period of time, what time will it take for all the crores of Hindus to mix with all the millions of untouchables?"—and ascertain the progress from the answer. But we get a measure of the progress from incidents which occur from time to time. The issue was first discussed as a principle in the Gujarat Vidyapith. As a result, the principle of admitting *Antyaja* pupils in its schools was accepted even at the risk of putting its very existence in danger, and some members who had tendered their resignations on this issue were allowed to leave the Vidyapith. If, again, the existence of an institution like the Dakshinamurti Bhavan is in serious danger today, the reason is the same. The teachers who are the very soul of the Bhavan are fighting a life-and-death struggle there to get the principle accepted. I cannot claim credit for either of these two results. I would have been defeated if the majority of the members of the Vidyapith had opposed me. But, on the contrary, they themselves believed in the principle independently of my view. In the holy fight which is being waged in the Dakshinamurti Bhavan, I cannot claim to have a hand even as an individual member. It was because of this issue that several proffered donations to the Tilak Swaraj Fund were withheld, but the managers of the Fund did not care for the loss. *Antyajas* have freely attended hundreds of public meetings in Gujarat and elsewhere. The All-India Congress Committee has sanctioned an expenditure of more than Rs. 50,000 for *Antyaja*-welfare activities at various places. This amount excludes the money already spent by the Provincial Committees. Non-co-operators have thus been working all over India and independently of party considerations. In every province, enthusiastic young men of character have been, with the utmost sincerity of purpose, sacrificing their all in the service of *Antyajas*. This is the first time that, in every constituency, *Antyaja* brothers have been elected delegates though they had expressed no such desire.

This for the satisfaction of the authors of the letter and other *Antyaja* friends like them who feel disappointed. But, while we may draw their attention to such a movement having spread, we must admit at the same time that there is some truth in their complaint. Many persons simply make a show of mixing [with *Antyajas*] in order to hoodwink others, and are not sincere about the matter. Mixing with them in this spirit will yield bitter fruit. The practice of untouchability is an offence against dharma and its disappearance will bear fruit only if the prejudice is shed from the heart. The campaign against it is not a political move so that

we may do just enough to throw dust in people's eyes. Nor is the movement undertaken in order to please or bribe *Antyajas*. Our only object is to satisfy our own conscience; our very conception of this evil is that, as long as Hindu society does not rid itself of it, it will continue to block our path invisibly, if not visibly, and will prevent our success in winning swaraj. The consequences of karma are hard to comprehend; its law admits of no exception. We always reap, visibly or invisibly, the fruits of our good and bad deeds, of our sins and virtuous acts.

There is not a shred of doubt in my mind that so long as we have not cleansed our hearts of this evil and have not accepted the path of non-violence, so long as Hindus and Muslims have not become sincerely united, we shall not be free. Our progress in all these three fields is impossible to measure by any visible yardstick. Till we succeed in regard to all three, we shall not get swaraj and when we get it, we shall have succeeded in them. So long as Hindu society turns a deaf ear to the six crores of *Antyajas* crying for justice at our doors, we shall not get swaraj, never.

But even if caste-Hindus wash off their sins, will *Antyajas* ascend to heaven in consequence? For that, they themselves should strive. They should give up drinking, refuse to eat leftovers, stop eating meat and, though for the sake of service, engaged in the most uncleanly work, remain clean and worship God. All this is for them to attend to. Others cannot do it for them. To banish hunger from among them, they have the spinning-wheel and the handloom at their service. Thousands of *Antyajas* have taken them up and prospered. The swadeshi movement is such that it feeds and strengthens all the limbs and I, for one, am certain that it is swadeshi which will, in time, end our abject poverty.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1921

237. *TELEGRAM TO MRS. MOTILAL NEHRU*[1]

AHMEDABAD,
December 8, 1921

MRS. NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

CONGRATULATE YOU KAMLA. MAY GOD GIVE YOU COURAGE HOPE.

GANDHI

From the original. Courtesy: Municipal Museum, Allahabad

238. *LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

[SABARMATI,
December 8, 1921][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your telegram as also your letter. I hope Mrs. Nehru is calm and unruffled. Carry on your work without worrying.

Devdas is going there; you will have all the help that he can give. Ask for more help if you need it. Improve the standard of the *Independent*. Keep a good control over [correspondents'] reports. It does not matter if you get fewer [reports] but see that they are good. Take Satisbabu's[3] help if you can get it. I have not written to Andrews, but you can write to him. I have not written because it may imply some kind of pressure.

I should be glad to have a letter from Mrs. Nehru.

There is always a danger in taking vows prescribed by others. Take those that you can and which you think worth taking from among the ones suggested to you and then stick to them tenaciously. You need not take them if you do not have the strength to take them just now. There is no harm in not taking them, but there certainly is in not keeping them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 11428

[1] On the arrest of Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru on December 6

[2] The addressee's telegram was received late at night on the 7th and Devdas left for Delhi on the 8th morning.

[3] Satis Chandra Mukerji

239. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Friday [December 9, 1921][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Received your telegram. I am not happy that you have had to pay security for publishing the *Independent*. But it is our duty to do whatever Panditji wishes. I would certainly be pleased if you are arrested. Do tell Panditji, however, that it would be better not to pay any security if it is again demanded and to issue a hand-written paper instead. It is the easiest thing to do. They will certainly arrest you, but that does not matter. Sarup and Ranjit are going there, they also can become proprietors. I shall certainly try to send someone from here.

Pyarelal can certainly come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the original: S.N. 106028

240. TELEGRAM TO MRS. BASANTI DEVI DAS[2]

[On or after *December 10, 1921*]

CONGRATULATE YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND. EXPECT YOU AHMEDABAD.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 13-12-1921

241. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY[3]

[AHMEDABAD,
After *December 10, 1921*]

It is a delightful thing to hear of these arrests; two things are needed to ensure early establishment of swaraj—a ceaseless stream

[1] The addressee paid security and took charge of the *Independent* on the 7th.

[2] On the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10

[3] This was written when the addressee, editor, *Servant* of Calcutta, became the President of the Bengal Congress Committee after the arrest of C. R. Das on December 10, 1921.

of civil resisters, and a non-violent atmosphere. I hope that Bengal will lead in both these matters.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 170

242. ONE YEAR'S TIME-LIMIT

I am being implored, on the one hand, not to carry out my threat to retire to the Himalayas if we do not get swaraj by the end of this year. On the other hand, I am asked what face I shall show to the people if we fail to get swaraj. How great will be the people's disappointment? Having made a promise, I shall now realize what an error I have made.

I expect that readers of *Navajivan* will not think in this manner. But I know that some of them do. My promise was conditional. Laying down conditions which could be easily fulfilled, I told the people: "Fulfill these conditions and win swaraj."

But friends can argue that, when laying down conditions, a man of practical wisdom would consider the other party's capacity to fulfil them. This is true. It is also true that I claim to be such a man. If I think I cannot make this claim, I should not remain in public life.

If, therefore, people are obliged to ask, at the end of the year, when they would get the promised swaraj, my claim of practical wisdom would have been disproved and I must betake myself to the Himalayas.

However, if the people clearly realize that the only way to get swaraj is the one I have pointed out and feel that they have covered a long distance on the road, have almost reached its end, they will have no ground for reproaching me nor I any reason for running away to the Himalayas. We shall then almost have won swaraj. One who has discovered the path to liberation always obeys the *yama* and *niyama* disciplines, who observes his chains loosening day by day, has as good as attained liberation. He does not swerve from his path. As the days pass, he goes from strength to strength. He needs no guide. The man who doubts has his moorings nowhere and is doomed to perish. Though moving on the road, he does not advance because he does not know where he is.

Similarly, if all the delegates who will be assembling [for the Congress] in this month agree without much argument that the path we have taken is the only one which can lead to swaraj, that we already see swaraj in the distance, that we have achieved more

during this year than during any previous year and that they, the delegates, are determined to adhere to this path—then, I would say, we have as good as got swaraj. It is due to lack of effort on our part that something will still remain to be secured. A little more effort and our swaraj will be complete.

Those who believe, and those who have spread the belief, that Gandhi will somehow get them swaraj before December, both these classes of persons are, whether or not they know it, their own and the country's enemies; they have not understood the meaning of swaraj at all. Swaraj means self-reliance. To hope that I shall get swaraj for them is the opposite of self-reliance. I can only point out the means; it is then for the people to work and secure swaraj. I am a *vaidya*; I prescribe the medicine, explain the manner of taking it, mention the other things to be taken with it and specify the quantity to be taken every time. It is ultimately for the patient to act and do the best he can.

If, at the end of the year, the people have not realized through their own experience that swaraj will be won through non-violence, through unity of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians and Jews, through swadeshi and the removal of untouchability, then I shall have been proved totally deficient in practical wisdom and I must retire to the Himalayas.

It is true that I had expected much more than this. I had expected that we would not only discover the path during this year, but would also see the image of swaraj before our eyes, would have arrived at a settlement with the rulers and, non-co-operation having been withdrawn, would have commenced genuine co-operation. I am afraid we shall not see ourselves placed in this happy position during the days which remain. On the contrary, our non-co-operation will have become more intense and co-operation will appear to be out of the question altogether. But this phase itself will bring co-operation nearer. It is the darkest before dawn. The pain before delivery being almost unbearable, the woman doubts whether the delivery will ever take place. In the same way, the hour of birth of our freedom will be the most difficult period for us.

Bombay put an obstacle in our path. We ourselves had planned to start a fight and invite suffering upon ourselves; Bombay made this impossible. But, fortunately for us, the Government itself has given us an opportunity of doing so, having intensified repression. If we fearlessly avail ourselves of the opportunity it has offered, we shall see before long freedom become a reality.

Why do I not, however, say categorically that this will not happen during the present year? I do not say this because I do not know for certain. I am not omniscient. I am not God. I believe God to be omnipotent. No one knows when He will bring about profound changes in our hearts. Did I know that, on the 17th November, even while I was voicing great optimism, heart-breaking things were being done? How can I be sure that, while I am myself uncertain whether we shall see freedom become a reality during the days which remain, God is not actually preparing this result? If I am the doctor, I am the patient too. I have not won the freedom for which I have been striving. I have discovered the path and I will never abandon it. But the freedom which I want is still far away. I would not be surprised, however, if I got it in this month. I can assure the readers that I have spared no efforts. I am in truth seeking my own *moksha* through my efforts to win swaraj for India. When I feel that instead of progressing towards *moksha*, I am forging chains for myself, that instead of rising I am falling, no one will be able to hold me back. At present, though, I do not feel that my bonds have become stronger. I state most emphatically that I do not know what the state of my mind will be on the 1st of January. The reader will thus see that the struggle for swaraj is a spiritual effort for me, a means of attaining *moksha*. My effort is purely selfish and will remain so.

In one sense, I do not wish to see freedom become a reality this year. I wish to see all fanciful notions about me dispelled. I want people to know that I am but a small creature. I see nothing but harm to the people and to me in my being looked upon as a giant. I shall not mind if people believe that my calculations have been wrong, that I am a fool or that I am an impractical man. Instead of their believing that they got anything through my strength, it is much better that they should believe every achievement to be the result of their own *tapascharya* and self-purification—much better indeed that it should be so in fact. I only want the people to have this faith in me. "He fearlessly placed before us what he thought to be the truth at the time." I desire no better certificate than this. I do not deserve anything more.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

243. BARDOLI

I shall never forget Maulana Azad Sobhani's and my visit to the Bardoli taluka. Both of us marvelled at the simplicity, goodness, sincerity and determination of the people in that taluka. There is no doubt that the work there has been done very well. We have both felt that, on the whole, that taluka can organize itself for civil disobedience in the shortest time.

There are about sixty-five Government schools there. Fifty-one of these have already become national schools. And there is no doubt that enthusiasm mounts wherever schools become national. It is only a few weeks since schools came under the control of the people and, therefore, the progress is rather slow. Children are required to work on the spinning-wheel. The use of khadi has increased very much among men. All were seen wearing a shirt, dhoti, or half pants, and a cap. There was a fairly good number of women in khadi saris at the meeting. There is excellent unity among Hindus and Muslims. People do not object to contact with the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis* who attend meetings and they are allowed to sit with others. The people of the taluka have behaved very peacefully while doing all this. They have also maintained good relations with the officials, nor is there any hostility towards those who co-operate with the Government.

We cannot but congratulate the people on this progress.

The picture, however, is not complete. The people should have such measure of control over the schools that no person would even think of Government schools or of the education given in them. Schools should be so organized that children do not roam about but under teachers of upright character, learn to build their own character. Hindu boys and girls should learn Sanskrit and study the *Gita*, and Muslim children should learn Arabic and study the Koran. All children should spin beautiful, strong, well-twisted yarn of even texture; some of them should card and weave as well. Khadi should become more popular among women and all men and women should exclusively wear khadi. Not only this but the khadi required by the taluka should be spun and woven locally and mill-made yarn should not be used at all. Progress in this is very slow. The looms are few in number. In comparison, the number of spinning-wheels is quite good, but there should be many more of them and they should be in regular operation. It

should be impossible, or very difficult, to get foreign or mill-made cloth in Bardoli.

It is not enough that *Dheds* and *Bhangis* can attend meetings freely. The meaning of ending the practice of untouchability should be fully grasped. People should come to love *Dheds* and *Bhangis.* Their children should freely attend national schools; if they do not, we should go and fetch them, persuading the parents to send them. We should visit their localities and inquire about their hardships. We should plead with them and persuade them to give up their bad habits. It is good indeed that there are no quarrels at all between Hindus and Muslims, but the ill-feeling that they harbour against each other must disappear. Our conduct towards Parsis, Christians and those who co-operate with the Government should be so courteous that they do not entertain the slightest fear of non-co-operators. We may get liquor-booths closed only if we can do so by reasoning with the owners. The latter must not be ostracized and kept out of common gatherings. We may bring them and the drink-addicts to listen to us, as well as we can, with love. There should not be even the slightest appearance of coercion on them. They should feel absolutely secure. A whole army of volunteers need not go to bring the pupils out of schools, need not go into a village and start a fast. Only if the people are awakened in the right manner and they voluntarily withdraw their children from Government schools will the results be genuine.

I have certainly formed the impression that the people have done very good work. But they betray some ignorance in their work. People seem to think that it will be necessary to wear khadi only till December end, that afterwards they will not have to run schools and will not need to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis.* Work done in such a spirit will be insincere and will have a bad rather than a good effect. I do not now think it possible that we shall have power in our hands in December. But, even after we have got it, we shall be wearing cloth spun and woven in our talukas or villages, our schools will not be run by any outsiders and their management will be entirely in our hands. Instead of two authorities, as at present, there will be only one when we have swaraj. If the Government is ours, of course the control will be ours. We shall have to be as hard-working then as we are now and shoulder as much responsibility then as we do now. We shall, even then, mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and love them. In what we are doing today, we are training ourselves for swaraj and making ourselves fit for it. In effecting any changes, therefore, we should

understand their meaning and know that they will stay afterwards. Only then shall we be fit [for swaraj].

I believe that the Bardoli taluka is fully capable of doing all this. The deficiency I have pointed out is partly due to lack of time and, partly, to ignorance. I am, therefore, not at all disappointed; I believe that the people will be able to overcome these shortcomings within a very short time and be completely fit for offering civil disobedience.

The supporters of the Government whom I met also testified to everything having been done peacefully and told me that Bardoli would be ready in six months' time. Shri Kunvarji, who is the soul of the taluka, believes that they will succeed in a month's time in spreading spinning and weaving and other activities. The reports of either are likely to contain an element of unconscious exaggeration. However, the good men and women of Bardoli have certainly produced the impression on my mind that they will not take long to deserve a certificate of fitness.

What impressed me especially was that the workers were not only young men, but included grown-ups as well. The women, too, take interest. The volunteers do honorary work. Whatever expenses are incurred are met by Bardoli itself. Hence, the entire taluka, and not merely a certain section of it, can be said to have awakened.

Bardoli's responsibility has now increased. Bardoli inspired me, when I was in Delhi, to give concrete shape to the plan of civil disobedience and this increased the enthusiasm in other provinces too. In consequence, some great fighters are in jail. Having thus been instrumental in rousing enthusiasm, Bardoli cannot rest now. It must complete the process of self-purification and, for this purpose, it must put in a Herculean effort. The required effort will be easy to make if people work wisely and unceasingly and if their change of heart is genuine.

The reader will see that I have not discussed the question whether or not the people have the capacity to suffer, to go to jail or to face bullets. I have not even inquired of anyone. It is my experience and my faith that, when a person does his duty faithfully, he soon gets the strength to suffer. Bardoli, moreover, is making all this effort in order to be fit to go to jail; how can I, then, insult it by asking the question of whether it has the necessary strength? At this time, going to jail is a difficult thing. It is, of course, easy to keep out. If a person does not spin, does not wear khadi, is not honest or polite, has ill will towards all and refuses to mix with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* will anyone ask such a person to

go to jail? A taluka which clings to the practice of untouchability will never be invited to court imprisonment. I, therefore, do not at all doubt Bardoli's courage or its readiness to go to jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-12-1921

244. *MY NOTES*[1]

Welcome Colonel Pratapsinghji

I have been hearing for a week now that, at the time of the Congress session, the Government will hand over control of Ahmedabad to Colonel Pratapsinghji and his men and that the Colonel has undertaken to deal with the delegates attending the Congress. I am absolutely sure that the rumour is unfounded. The Government is not so timid or wicked or foolish as this rumour suggests. It is sufficiently equipped to put down the Congress delegates. I do not believe that the Government would like to survive with Colonel Pratapsingh's help. I am told, however, that the simple-minded mill-workers have been frightened and feel agitated. No one should hear such rumours or, having heard them, spread them further. If there is danger of any kind, the Congress will let the people know. It is a sign of cowardice to get frightened by any and every kind of rumour, and cowards cannot win swaraj or preserve it after winning it. Such fear, moreover, is also a sign of lack of faith in God. Why can we not tell ourselves, "God's will be done", and remain calm?

Let us suppose, however, that Colonel Pratapsinghji arrives with his men. Is that any reason to get frightened? He, too, is one of us. His men also are our own people. We should offer him our services, welcome him and cheerfully face his men's bullets as well. Why should we at all give them a chance to shoot? Will they molest people going about their way peacefully? If they do, we may let them and continue on our way. Will they snatch away our khadi caps? If they try to, we should hold fast to our caps and submit to the blows. If, despite that, they succeed in snatching away the cap, we should put on another, come out again and submit to more blows. In the end, they will get weary of the business. Those who cannot submit to blows may not pass along the road on which they are stationed, but should not in any case put away the white cap. A vegetarian, for instance, will not go to any country, like the Arctic region, in which he cannot live without

meat. If by chance he finds himself in such a place, he will meet death but not eat meat. That alone is dharma which is followed at the cost of one's life; anything else is mere convenience or amusement.

If we have resolved to give up fear of white soldiers, why should we fear Colonel Pratapsingh's brown men?

Fear is a sign of our harbouring violence and hostility. Anyone whom we regard as an enemy is sure to become so. If we treat even an enemy as a friend, he will certainly become one in the course of time. Man is made by his thoughts. We reap as we sow. It cannot happen that one sows friendship and reaps enmity. Our non-co-operation is a means of winning over even an enemy with love.

This is not only the Hindus' dharma. Islam teaches the same thing. It gives the first place to patience. It has room for war, but only as a last resort and when one's side is less numerous than the tyrant's, when refusing to fight may be a sign of cowardice and when the person who leads the host into the battle is an illustrious soul trusted by all and without any selfish aim. This is not, cannot be, the position in India. We are more numerous than the opponent. There is no one to be our leader in fighting. For us to fight will be no sign of manliness. We have not exhausted all other means. We have not yet fully learnt the lesson of peace and not completely adopted swadeshi. We have not learnt to be truthful; we, Hindus and Muslims, have not yet rid ourselves of mutual ill will and a large number of us love co-operation with the Government. I have heard many *aalims*[1] say that, in these circumstances, fighting will be not jehad but *fasad*[2].

From the point of view of whichever religion we consider the matter, we can arrive at only one conclusion. We wish to conquer the enemy with love and, therefore, whether it is a white army or a black one which is sent, our attitude towards it should be the same. Accordingly, we should be ready to say "Welcome, Colonel", if Colonel Pratapsinghji, or some other Colonel, does indeed come with his men, though I believe that no Colonel Pratapsinghji is coming to teach us a lesson.

Has Das Been Arrested?

A similar rumour is afloat about Das having been arrested. I certainly do not believe that he has been arrested. But it is more likely that he has been arrested than that Colonel Pratapsingh will

1 Learned persons

2 Riot

be coming. With increasing repression and the clouds in the Indian sky constantly changing their colour, how can anyone know who will be arrested and when? And why should we at all care to know who else has been arrested? Even if all the leaders be arrested, we will not resort to violence. If we have been lazy so far, we should start working; if, with the leaders in our midst, we are inclined to be a little irresponsible, in their absence we should take the responsibility upon ourselves and assume leadership. In our struggle, everyone is entitled to be a leader, since the leader is one who does greater service. If leadership is for service, how can it incite envy?

We should, therefore, rejoice if Deshbandhu Das has been arrested, feel enthused rather than despondent and have hope that the hour of our victory is drawing near. We shall get nothing at all without being tested and, if we do get anything, we shall not be able to retain it. As food taken when one is not hungry is not assimilated, likewise the happiness which comes to us without our suffering for it can be of no profit to us. We become stronger as our bonds break one after one through our internal strength. If, however, a person who has been bound for some time is unexpectedly set free by somebody else, he seems to behave, actually does behave, like one who has been crippled. The same thing happens to us. The imprisonment of our leaders, therefore, heralds the dawn of our freedom.

Let us not mind if Lalaji is absent from the Congress, or Das, or Mohiuddin, or Phooken from Assam, or Shanti Swarup of Farukhabad, or Harkarannath of Lucknow, or Gupta from Andhra, or Yukub Hassan of Madras or Kitchlew or Stokes or Pandit Nekiram, or Pandit Sunderlal, or Bhagwandinji, or Pir Badshah Mian, or Jitendralal Bannerjee, or Sengupta; what does it matter if they or other fighters like them are not present? Let us not mind if the Ali Brothers are absent and so is the contingent of brave Sikh Sardars. Though they may not be physically present, their souls will be with us, will watch the strength we display and judge us. They will see whether or not we were worthy of their sacrifices. Soldiers are not afraid of being wounded. They know that to be wounded is to prove one's courage, and to prove one's courage is to win. We should cling to our faith that anyone who serves when outside the prison serves better still if, though innocent, he is imprisoned.

To Parsi Brothers and Sisters

I know that in many places our Parsi brothers and sisters feel uncomfortable and are afraid of Hindus and Muslims. I feel

ashamed even to write this. It should be a matter of shame to Swarajists if, when we are chanting the *mantra* of swaraj, any community or innocent person has reason to feel apprehensive. At any rate I assure our Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians. Perhaps some British officials are frightening them, deliberately or otherwise. But it becomes Parsi friends not to let others frighten them; they should, instead, regard Hindus and Muslims as their brothers and trust them. Let us resolve that we shall die at one another's hands or be saved by one another. Trust begets trust, while distrust produces greater distrust.

While giving this assurance, I advise Parsi friends, wherever they feel the slightest concern, to inform the Congress or the Khilafat office in the area; those in charge of the offices will not fail to make arrangements to protect them. Many Parsi brothers told me in Bombay that several Memons had given full protection to Parsi men and women. Parsi families were given shelter in some Marwari homes. I am sure there are no Parsis who believe that the entire Hindu or the entire Muslim community has turned against them and the Christians.

Some Parsi friends write to me about the losses they have suffered. The only consolation I can give them is that I am consulting Parsi leaders to see if we can set up a committee to look into such cases. If such a committee is formed, arrangements will be made to compensate all those who have incurred losses and who cannot overlook them. Personally, I do not wish that any Parsi should approach the Government for compensation.

KAPADVANJ AND THASRA

Some cultivators inform me that this year the crop in some places in the Kapadvanj and Thasra talukas has been less than four annas and in others between four and six annas, and they ask me what they should do in these circumstances. As a non-co-operator, the only advice I can give is that they should not approach the Government for relief; however, if they have courage they can notify the Government that they are unable to pay the assessed revenue as the crop has been less than four annas. If the Government does not accept the cultivators' assessment, let it nominate a *panch*[1] on which it and the cultivators will be represented equally. Both parties should abide by the *pancha's*

[1] A board of arbitrators

award. Should the Government refuse to accept the proposal for a *panch*, cultivators can decline to pay the revenue and let the Government collect it by auctioning their belongings. Before taking such a step, however, cultivators should consider the matter from every point of view.

1. Will they remain united?
2. Can they suffer their cattle, utensils and other household goods being auctioned?
3. Can they remain peaceful?

If all these three questions can be answered in the affirmative, they can, as explained above, ask for the appointment of a *panch* and, if this is not agreed to refuse to pay the revenue. The cultivators should also bear in mind that the Congress will be able to give them no assistance in this struggle which concerns them alone. They will have to rely on their own strength. They should have competent leaders among them. There should be no room for the slightest dishonesty.

This for relief of the cultivators' local distress. If they wish to join the struggle for swaraj and Khilafat, they should be ready to suffer more. No question about crop-assessment can be raised in this connection. Before joining the struggle, they should fully adopt swadeshi, persuade the women to do the same and do away with the evil of untouchability. Only then will they be held fit to offer civil disobedience.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 11-12-1921

245. *TELEGRAM TO HARILAL GANDHI*[1]

[On or after *December 11, 1921*]

WELL DONE GOD BLESS YOU. RAMDAS[2], DEVDAS AND OTHERS WILL FOLLOW YOU.

Aaj, 15-12-1921

[1] After his arrest on December 11; he was Gandhiji's eldest son.
[2] Gandhiji's third son

246. *TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI*[1]

[SABARMATI,
On or after *December 11, 1921*]

YOU MAY COURT ARREST AT ANY TIME.

BAPU

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 171

247. *LETTER TO C. M. DOKE*

SABARMATI,
December 13 [*1921*][2]

MY DEAR CLEMENT[3],

What a perfect delight to have had your letter! It has revived all the sweetest memories of pleasant companionship. Pray send my best love to mother, Olive[4], Willie[5] and Mrs. Evans.

I assure you I am doing nothing without prayer.

Mrs. Gandhi and Ramdas are with me. Devdas is in Allahabad. Harilal has just gone to prison in Calcutta as a civil resister. Manilal[6] is attending to *Indian Opinion* in South Africa.

Do please write occasionally.

With our regards to you and Mrs. Clement.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : G.N. 744

[1] This was sent after the arrest of Harilal Gandhi.

[2] Judging from the references to Devdas and Harilal, this letter was evidently written in 1921.

[3] Son of Rev. J. J. Doke who was a close associate of Gandhiji in South Africa

[4] Daughter of Rev. Doke

[5] Eldest son of Rev. Doke

[6] Gandhiji's second son

248. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Tuesday, December 13, 1921

I have your letter. Hope you have recovered from the injuries you had received. At present, we must keep fit and be ready to receive Goddess Fortune's favour.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

249. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[2]

[On or after *December 14, 1921*]

PANDIT MALAVIYAJI
BENARES CITY

IMPOSSIBLE LEAVE AHMEDABAD. WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING HERE TWENTY-THIRD WILL GLADLY ATTEND YOUR CONFERENCE IF YOU HOLD AHMEDABAD OR AFTER CONGRESS WHICH PLEASE ATTEND.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7715

[1] Literally, wait for Goddess Lakshmi to put the auspicious *tilak* on the forehead.

[2] This was in reply to Madan Mohan Malaviya's telegram of December 14, 1921 which read: "Thanks for telegram. Arriving Ashram eighteenth. Convening conference of representatives of all parties at Bombay on 22nd 23rd to consider what united action should be taken in present situation. Trust you attend. Wire".

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PROF. T. L. VASWANI'S REPLY[1]

DEAR SIR,

Your letter dated 30th reached me by post yesterday.

I could have no objection to a friendly meeting. I am still of opinion that a meeting in the mood reflected in your letters will be fruitless. In your last letter, indeed, you seem to suspect that I am an "agitator" using that mock-trial as a "political dodge", and "the unhappiness of my friend" for "the purposes of political agitation." For the love and esteem I have for friends in Europe, for the reverence I have for her poets and prophets of freedom, I must bear with what my European brethren in this country may say of me and my motives.

I am glad you say the sentence passed upon my friend seems to be very severe. I am an optimist; and I yet hope when you look into the matter carefully, you will agree with me, that the sentence is *absolutely unjust.* Justice demands his *acquittal.*

The "decision of an Indian magistrate"—you say. As I sat in that room hearing the case and then the judgment, I felt my Great Motherland was insulted. It looked as though conviction was pre-arranged. It, certainly, was not a judicial trial.

You say: "There are means open to you for getting revision" (of the sentence). Why not take them? *The only just revision would be the Swami's acquittal.* But he will not appeal to the higher court. Why not? you ask. Then let me quote you this from a letter of the Poet Tagore: "I remember when in my school days I used to get blows and insults from a teacher who was particularly foul in his language and unjust in his dealings, I refused to complain or to cry. In fact I tried to *maintain my dignity by ignoring my punishment and thus I had my moral victory.*" Doesn't it explain the Swami's attitude? And the longer he is locked up, the smaller must look the Government in the eyes of honest men.

Yes,—there is unrest—and deeper than you may know of. The way to lessen it? I indicated it in my last letter. Sind officials must be just and responsive to the New Spirit. You value ideas, you say, for their worth in practical application. And it is in practical application that the ideas of freedom and equality and justice professed by the official class have failed us again and again. From my point of view, indeed, *the true idealist is practical* and *the man sin-*

[1] This was written on the "Tilak Day" as indicated in the letter.

cerely practical is an idealist; there is *idealism* in his action. In the sentence inflicted on the Swami, I see the desire to show *strength. Such strength is weakness.* For power which tramples upon justice is weakness,—*the weakness of violence.*

Your culture and travels notwithstanding, you justify, so it seems to me,—the policy of Government. I can account for this only in one way, —you know nothing of the humiliation and sufferings experienced by a subject-nation. Dyer shot down between 300 and 400 Indians; and he enjoys a pension of £900 a year and his European admirers presented him a purse, I believe, of about £30,000! But innocent Indians, like the Swami, are rotting in jail—for loving their country! There was a time British officials were credited with great virtues, —tolerance, sympathy, justice; and even in 1914 when the War broke out, the National Congress resolved that "India would stand by the Empire in all cases and at all hazards." To-day, the Congress is boycotting the visit of the Prince of Wales,—for no fault of His Royal Highness! Why? The unrest is deepening everyday. Why? The gulf between the State and the Nation, Government and People, is widening day by day. Why? Government is only too anxious to brandish the big stick; Government has faith in *force.*

Do you know how many of our young men are in jail to-day for political opinions? Writing on the Tilak Day, can I forget that some of the best among those who have worked for India have had their patriotism penalized at one time or another? Tilak the Scholar, Tilak the Patriot was sent to jail,—more than once. Annie Besant was interned, Lala Lajpat Rai was deported. Bipin Chandra Pal was not allowed to enter the Punjab. They were no rebels. But they loved India! How many young men in Bengal were sent to jail for the politics of national freedom? And some of them,—how were they sent to jail? A Bengali professor was interned,—without being convicted of any crime! He was interned in a distant jail,—without the kowledge of his mother. She took long to know of her son's plight. She petitioned for a proper inquiry into her son's case. She was informed that her son was in solitary cell and had become insane! Two ladies were arrested in a village by police. They were sent to jail. The press exposed the police *zulum.* Government confessed the mistake and ordered the release. But the ladies were still detained in prison,—for a fortnight! A telegram ordering their release had been mislaid! And after their release, no policeman was punished! Only last week, the police fired upon an unarmed crowd in Matiari, a village in Sind, one man died; about a dozen were wounded; a white-washing official version ran round the Press; a non-official version was held back by the telegraph authorities in Sind as "objectionable"! The story of Jallianwala is known to you. Where, I ask, where in any civilized European country will such things be permitted, to-day? Deportations, internments, and imprisonment of innocent men! Flogging and whipping and shooting of innocent men! This is the story of India for years as of no other country in Europe which I have seen and known. The reason is not far to seek. *They are free : India is in bondage.*

I spoke of British Imperialism. I said it was in conflict with the Spirit of Man in Asia, in Persia, in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, in India—its dominant motive has been economic control of the East; and here in this country we are trying by peaceful swadeshi to resist its "peaceful penetration". In Egypt and India and now in Muslim lands,—as in Ireland,—the Empire is in conflict with the principle of nationality. But this is a subject which needs a separate discussion.

You refer in your letter to the "true ideal of personal liberty" and ask for my remarks. I saw it in the *Gazette*—most hurriedly, I regret; and it is not before me at this moment. But I suppose your idea is to show that picketing the liquor shops is in conflict with the true ideal of personal liberty. I speak,—subject to correction. I should be sorry, indeed, if you really thought picketing inconsistent with personal liberty. Personal liberty is an ideal dear to the Frenchman. It is not in conflict with picketing as the Swami practised it. His picketing was *moral persuasion.* Drinking is disallowed in Hindu and Muslim scriptures. In a country like India, a national government would pass a measure of prohibition. The Government here resists popular opinion and national instincts; and the people wish to achieve by *picketing* what a national government easily would, by *prohibition.* Gokhale, I believe, started picketing at Poona years ago and some of the most earnest reformers regard picketing a moral duty. Picketing, however, may like several other innocent things be abused and become *coercion.* All *intimidation, coercion, social boycott, violence, is in conflict with my ideal of personal liberty.* I do not know if the Swami would, in theory, subscribe entirely to my view of personal liberty. I know many of my friends would not; they would not object to putting an end to the scandal of liquor-traffic by means of *social boycott.* One thing I am sure of. The Swami was always for *persuasion,* never for *intimidation or coercion.* One thing I repeat with emphasis. He did *not* assault a policeman; he did *not* use any criminal force. I asked him the question; his answer was an emphatic "no"; he would not tell a lie; and I would believe him against all your policemen. He did *not* assault anyone,' I say, and he used no criminal force. But he did something more dangerous! He carried on his anti-drink campaign with energy! He threatened to reduce revenue derived from an immoral traffic! And a giddy Government clutching at a policy of coercion have sentenced him to 12 months' rigorous imprisonment to "create impression"! The sentence *has* created "impression." For as the news will spread form town to town, India will know how justice and common sense are mocked in Sind—in this "new era" of "reforms"!

Yours truly,
T. L. VASWANI

Young India, 25-8-1921

APPENDIX II

CITIZENS' APPEAL

The following appeal signed by representatives of all communities was issued to the public:

The citizens of Bombay will be glad to learn that, thanks to the concerted efforts of Hindu, Mussulman and Parsi leaders, peace has been restored in most parts of the town. From morning till night they went about in the town, in carriages, pleading with people to be quiet and to preserve peace, and the latter responded to their appeals. Some excitement still, no doubt, prevails in a few localities. Everyone should endeavour to restore quiet in those parts. It behoves us all to forgive and forget the errors of one another. Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians and Jews, who have their homes in India, ought to live as brothers and sisters and bear with the differences and failings of one another. We have all to be ashamed of the stain on the fair name of Bombay. Only by restoring and preserving peace can that stain be wiped out, and we appeal to all the citizens of Bombay for hearty co-operation in the matter.

Young India, 24-11-1921

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CHRONOLOGY

(*August 21—December 14, 1921*)

August 21 : A military proclamation was issued as the Moplahs in Malabar rose in revolt on August 20, set up Khilafat raj and looted Hindu zemindars.

August 22 : In Tezpur, at public meeting, Gandhiji lit bonfire of foreign cloth.

August 24 : In Jorhat, received address from ratepayers' Association and Sarbajanik Sabha.
Left for Tinsukia *en route* to Dibrugarh.

August 25 : In Dibrugarh, addressed women's meeting and public meeting.

August 30 : From Sylhet sent telegram and letter to Vallabhbhai Patel suggesting hartal in protest against visit of Prince of Wales.

August 31 : In Chittagong, spoke giving advice to railway workers on strike and telling them how he had successfully guided strike of forty thousand workers in South Africa.

September 1 : In *Young India*, wrote on "Ethics of Destruction", replying to C. F. Andrews on burning of foreign cloth; also wrote on "National Education" and discussed question of medium of instruction.

September 4 : In *Navajivan*, wrote on "Moplah Outbreak", on "Preparations for Congress" in Ahmedabad and on his experiences of Assam tour.

September 5 : Wrote to Vallabhbhai Patel on postponement of civil disobedience.

September 6 : In Calcutta, met Rabindranath Tagore.

September 7 : Spoke at Punjab Sabha meeting and addressed Marwari merchants.

September 8 : Addressed public meetings on boycott of foreign cloth.

September 10 : Addressed Khilafat volunteers.

September 13 : In Midnapore, addressed a meeting.

September 14 : Mahomed Ali arrested at Waltair on way to Malabar.

Gandhiji's message to Bombay citizens on arrest of Mahomed Ali.

After *September 14* : Addressed circular letter to leaders inviting them to meet in Bombay to consider arrest of Ali Brothers and others.

September 15 : Arrived at Madras.
Interviewed by representatives of *Daily Express* and *Madras Mail*.
Spoke at public meeting.
Appealed to Hindi-lovers to give financial help for spreading Hindi in Madras.

September 16 : In Madras, addressed meetings of women, piece-goods merchants and labourers.

September 17 : In Cuddalore, addressed public meeting.
Left for Porto Novo *en route* to Kumbakonam.
Sir Sankaran Nair resigned membership of Council of India.

September 18 : C. R. Das elected President of Congress.
In Kumbakonam, Gandhiji spoke at public meeting.

September 19 : In Trichinopoly, spoke in reply to address by the Municipality and Congress Committee.

September 20: In Srirangam, spoke in reply to municipal address and at public meeting.

September 21 : In Dindigul, spoke in reply to address by Munici-cipal Council and at public meeting.
In Madura, replied to address of welcome.

September 22 : In Madura, issued message on swadeshi and loin-cloth. In Tiruppathur, spoke at citizens' meeting.
Addressed meetings at Kanadukathan, Kottayur and Deva-kottah.

September 23 : Interview to *Deshabhimani*.
Spoke at Tinnevelly.

September 24 : Issued appeal to Muslims of India on arrest of Ali Brothers.

September 25 : In *Navajivan*, wrote on Hindu-Muslim unity.

September 26 : Trial of Ali Brothers and others commenced at Karachi.

September 27 : In Salem, Gandhiji spoke in reply to Municipal address and at public meeting.

September 28 : In Tirupati, spoke in reply to Municipal address.

September 29 : In *Young India*, wrote on "Tampering with Loyalty" in reply to Bombay Governor's warning against sedition.

October 1 : In Bellary, replied to Municipal address.

October 2 : In *Navajivan*, wrote on "My Loin-cloth".
Sent on his birthday a message on swadeshi to the Bhagini Samaj, Bombay.

October 4 : Issued, with other leaders, Manifesto appealing to soldiers and civilians to sever connection with Government.

October 5 : In a letter to *The Bombay Chronicle*, appealed to people to remain peaceful in the event of his arrest.
Message to workers of the Ceded Districts.

October 6 : In *Navajivan*, wrote on problems of Indians in East Africa.

October 8 : In Ahmedabad, spoke at meeting of pupils of workers' schools.

October 9 : In *Navajivan*, wrote advising observance of strict non-violence, adoption of swadeshi, etc., in the event of his arrest.
In *Navajivan*, in article "Gujarat's Test", urged Gujarat to set an example by vigorous prosecution of non-co-operation programme.

October 12 : Spoke on swadeshi at Surat.

October 13 : "The Great Sentinel", reply to Rabindranath Tagore appeared in *Young India*.

October 16 : In *Navajivan*, Gandhiji urged Bombay to complete swadeshi programme, to be the first province to start peaceful revolt in the form of civil disobedience.
In his notes, in *Navajivan*, criticized colour bar in Fiji and East Africa and untouchability in India.

October 19 : Sent telegrams to C. Vijayaraghavachariar and Motilal Nehru on powers of Working Committee and A.I.C.C. president.

October 20 : In *Young India*, wrote on "The Meaning of the Moplah Rising".

October 23 : In Ahmedabad, spoke on swadeshi to women.
In *Navajivan*, appealed to Ahmedabad workers to give up drink habit.

October 27 : *Young India* published Mahomed Ali's letter to Gandhiji from Karachi Jail.

In *Young India*, in his article "Honour the Prince" while urging complete boycott of functions, Gandhiji appealed for "forbearance towards those who differ from us".

In *Young India* in article "The Secret of It" answered 24 very searching questions.

October 29 : In Ahmedabad, spoke at bonfire of foreign cloth.

October 31 : Began vow of spinning—to spin half an hour every day before the second meal, and to forgo the meal in case he failed to do so.

November 4 : In Delhi, spoke on civil disobedience resolution at the A.I.C.C. meeting.

November 5 : In Delhi, spoke on resolution regarding renouncing of government service including service in army.

November 9 : In Lahore, delivered convocation address at National College.

November 10 : In Lahore, spoke at public meeting on conviction of Ali Brothers.

In *Young India* article, "The Momentous Issue", explained conditions for civil disobedience.

November 16 : In Ahmedabad, spoke on birth anniversary of Srimad Rajchandra.

Before *November 17* : In message to Bombay public meeting, suggested steps to boycott celebrations in honour of Prince of Wales.

November 17 : In Bombay, addressed public meeting urging firm adherence to complete non-violence, swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity.

Outbreak of riots in Bombay on arrival of Prince of Wales.

In *Young India*, in article "Introspection", Gandhiji explained meaning of his threat of suicide if swaraj were not attained by end of December.

November 18 : In "A Deep Stain", condemned riots in Bombay.

November 19 : Commenced fast; appealed to citizens of Bombay for peace and communal amity.

November 20 : Issued appeal to Mavalis of Bombay.

November 21 : Broke fast at a gathering of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis. In a statement, appealed for communal harmony.

November 22 : His message to co-workers published in *Young India*.

November 25 : District Magistrate of Allahabad issued notices to Congress workers prohibiting meetings regarding civil disobedience.

November 26 : Viceroy declared Government's policy on non-co-operation in course of reply to Punjab Chamber of Commerce deputation.
Gandhiji issued appeal to citizens of Bombay on communal amity.

November 27 : Issued letter to Liberals on events in Malabar.

December 2 : Lala Lajpat Rai, K. Santanam and others arrested under Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act.

December 3 : Gandhiji complimented people of Bardoli on removal untouchability.

December 4 : In *Navajivan* article, characterized love as master key of non-co-operation.

December 6 : Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and others arrested at Allahabad under Section 17, Criminal Law Amendment Act.

On or after *December 7* : Gandhiji congratulated C. R. Das on arrest of his wife and other women of Bengal.

December 10 : George Joseph, editor of *The Independent*, sentenced to 18 months simple imprisonment.
C. R. Das arrested at Calcutta.

December 11 : Harilal Gandhi and other volunteers arrested.

INDEX

B

D

G

H

L

M

N

O

P

R

S

T

W

Y

Z

ERRATA

PAGE	FOR	READ
8, footnote 2	1856	*1876*
53, source line	7-9-1921	*4-9-1921*
158, lines 17, 21 and 22	obstinate and pliable	*Obstinate and Pliable*
158, line 22	ready-to-halt and facing-both-ways	*Ready-to-halt and Facing-both-ways*
200, footnote 1	rhyme	*formula*
283, Footnote 1	Mr. Tyabji	*Mr. Tyagi*